The lives of the English saints

John Henry Newman, Arthur Wollaston Hutton

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NEWMAN'S LIVES OF THE ENGLISH SAINTS

VOL. I.

MANSUETI HÆREDITABUNT TERRAM
ET DELECTABUNTUR
IN MULTITUDINE PACIS

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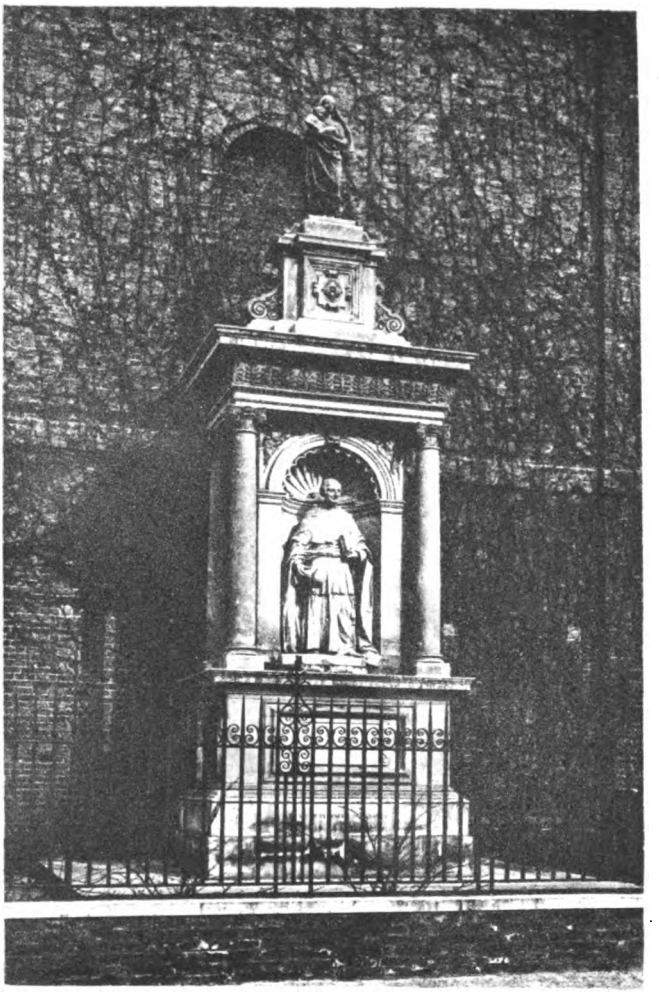

Statue of His Eminence Cardinal Newman at The Oratory Brompton.

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THE LIVES OF THE ENGLISH SAINTS

WRITTEN BY VARIOUS HANDS AT
THE SUGGESTION OF

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN
AFTERWARDS CARDINAL

IN 6 VOLUMES
VOLUME I

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

ARTHUR WOLLASTON HUTTON

NEW YORK
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CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION BY A. W. HUTTON vii

ST. STEPHEN HARDING

CHAP.

ADVERTISEMENT BY J. H. NEWMAN 1

I. ST. STEPHEN IN YOUTH 3

II. STEPHEN AT MOLESME 16

III. MOLESME DEGENERATES 24

IV. REMOVAL FROM MOLESME 35

V. ARRIVAL AT CITEAUX 42

VI. STEPHEN AS PRIOR 49

VII. CISTERCIAN USAGES 60

VIII. THE TIMES OF ALBERIC 82

IX. THE DEATH OF ALBERIC 90

X. STEPHEN AS ABBOT 94

XI. STEPHEN IN TIMES OF WANT 103

XII. THE MORTALITY AT CITEAUX 109

XIII. THE ARRIVAL OF THE NOVICES 118

XIV. THE WORLD EDIFIED BY THE BRETHREN OF CITEAUX 132

XV. A DAY AT CITEAUX 137

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CHAP. PAGE
XVI. STEPHEN AND BERNARD 161
XVII. STEPHEN CREATES AN ORDER 171
XVIII. ABBOT SUGER 185
XIX. TROUBLES IN THE CHURCH 198
XX. DEATH OF STEPHEN 209

ST. WILFRID

THE LIFE OF ST. WILFRID 215–449

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INTRODUCTION

THE "Lives of the English Saints," published in London by Mr. James Toovey in 1844–45, and now reprinted for the first time in their entirety, are justly described as Newman's work in this present edition, although with their actual authorship he had little enough to do. But for him, however, they would never have been written. Not only was he the inspired and inspiring leader of the movement which had made it possible for English Churchmen to deal sympathetically with the lives of mediæval saints; in this particular instance the plan was originally his, and he allotted to each author what seemed his appropriate work. Further than this Newman, as we shall shortly see, did not go; and what was done was a mere fragment of what he had proposed; but, none the less, in their genesis these Lives are Newman's; they have always been spoken of as such; and, so long as the limitations of his responsibility for them are made clear, they are rightly described as his.

It was in the period 1841–45, when he was, as he expresses it, on his deathbed as regards his membership with the Anglican Church, that he

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designed the Series; and its original object was to illustrate, or to attempt to illustrate, the continuity of the existing Church of England with the mediæval Catholic Church; but, as this thought had almost faded from his mind before September 1843, when the prospectus of the scheme was circulated, it seems likely that he had come to recognise in the undertaking a necessary outlet for the zeal of his ardent disciples, a field in which they could exercise themselves day and night, and find congenial and edifying occupation, while he himself, so long as his mind was not fully made up, was unable, either by example or precept, to direct them further. Perhaps the thought was first suggested to him by the publication, early in the year 1841, of a Life of Pope Gregory VII. by his close and ever-faithful friend, John William Bowden. On April 4 he wrote to him:—

"Now I am thinking of this about you, have you made up your mind what history to take up next? If not, is not *this* an idea? People shrink from Catholicity, and think it implies want of affection for our National Church. Well then, merely remind them that you *take* the National Church, but only you do not date it from the Reformation. In order to kindle love of the National Church, and *yet* to inculcate a Catholic tone, nothing else is necessary but to take our Church in the Middle Ages. Laud, I believe, somewhere calls St. Anselm his 'great predecessor.' Would not the history of Anselm be a great subject for you? Froude had intended taking it next. Nothing would more effectually tend to disarm people of their prejudices

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against Catholicity as anti-national than this. But, however, I leave it to your thoughts."

Four days later he wrote:—

"I quite agree in what you say about your historical subject. Certainly a continental subject is in all respects better suited to you than an English. It follows upon 'Hildebrand.' However, *some one* ought to take up St. Anselm, and I wish we could find who that is."

Two years later, on April 3, 1843, he wrote to Mr. Bowden:—

"I was going to write to you about a plan I have of editing in numbers 'Saints of the British Isles.' Is there any one which you would like to take? Some are appropriated, but I hardly know which are in your way, since you are a Continentalist. St. Boniface struck me. Anselm and Lanfranc are in Church's hands, who has a sort of right to them. I mean the work to be historical and devotional, but not controversial. Doctrinal questions need not enter. As to miracles, I think they may be treated as matters of faith—credible according to their evidence."

And again, on May 18 in the same year:—

"Last Long Vacation the idea suggested itself to me of publishing the Lives of the English Saints, and I had a conversation with Mr. Toovey upon it. I thought it would be useful, as employing the minds of men who were in danger of running wild, bringing them from doctrine to history, and from speculation to fact; again, as giving them an interest in the English soil and the English Church, and keeping them from seeking sympathy

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in Rome as she is; and further, as seeking to promote the spread of right views. But within the last month it has come upon me that, if the scheme goes on, it will be a practical carrying out of No. 90; from the character of the usages and opinions of ante-reformation times. It is easy to say 'Why *will* you do *anything?* why won't you keep quiet? what business had you to think of any such plan at all?' But I cannot leave a number of poor fellows in the lurch. I am bound to do my best for a great number of people both in Oxford and elsewhere. If *I* did not act, others would find means to do so.

"Well, the plan has been taken up with great eagerness and interest. Many men are setting to work. I set down the names of men, most of them engaged, the rest half engaged, and probably some actually writing."

The list that accompanied this letter was suppressed by Newman when the latter was published, but he tells us thus much about it, that it contained about thirty names, some of them at that time of the school of Dr. Arnold, others of Dr. Pusey's, some his own personal friends and of his own standing, others whom he hardly knew, while the majority were, of course, of the party of the new movement. The suppression of the list has been unfortunate, as it has made the authorship of the various Lives a matter of conjecture to some extent, and in certain cases of their ascription to wrong authors. The editor of this reprint has taken pains to obtain a correct list of the various writers, and this will be found in the Appendix

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to the sixth and last volume; but in a few cases it seems likely that there will always remain some obscurity.

In the early autumn of this year, 1843, the following prospectus was issued:—

"*Preparing for Publication, in Periodical Numbers, in small 8vo,* THE LIVES OF THE ENGLISH SAINTS, *Edited by the Rev. John Henry Newman, B.D., Fellow of Oriel College.*

"It is the compensation of the disorders and perplexities of these latter times of the Church that we have the history of the foregoing. We indeed of this day have been reserved to witness a disorganisation of the City of God, which it never entered into the minds of the early believers to imagine; but we are witnesses also of its triumphs and of its luminaries through those many ages which have brought about the misfortunes which at present overshadow it. If they were blessed who lived in primitive times, and saw the fresh traces of their Lord, and heard the echoes of Apostolic voices, blessed too are we, whose special portion it is to see that same Lord revealed in His saints. The wonders of His grace in the soul of man, its creative power, its inexhaustible resources, its manifold operations—all this we know as they knew it not. They never heard the names of St. Gregory, St. Bernard, St. Francis, and St. Louis. In fixing our thoughts then, as in an undertaking like the present, on the History of the Saints, we are but availing ourselves of that solace and recompense of our peculiar trials which has

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been provided for our need by our gracious Master.

"And there are special reasons at this time for recurring to the Saints of our own dear and glorious, most favoured, yet most erring and most unfortunate England. Such a recurrence may serve to make us love our country better, and on truer grounds than heretofore; to teach us to invest her territory, her cities and colleges, her wells and springs with sacred associations; to give us an insight into her present historical position in the course of the Divine Dispensation; to instruct us in the capabilities of the English character; and to open upon us the duties and the hopes to which that Church is heir, which was in former times the Mother of St. Boniface and St. Etheldreda.

"Even a selection or specimens of the Hagiology of our country may suffice for some of these high purposes; and in so wide and rich a field of research it is almost presumptuous in one undertaking to aim at more than such a partial exhibition. The list that follows,[1] though by no means so large as might have been drawn up, exceeds the limits which the Editor proposes to his hopes, if not to his wishes; but whether it is allowed him to accomplish a larger or smaller portion of it, it will be his aim to complete such subjects or periods as he begins before bringing it to a close. It is hardly necessary to observe that any list that is producible in this stage of the undertaking can

[1] Reprinted in the Appendix to volume vi. of this edition.

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but approximate to correctness and completeness in matters of detail, and even in the names which are selected to compose it.

"He has considered himself at liberty to include in the series such Saints as have been born in England, though they have lived and laboured out of it; and such again as have been in any sufficient way connected with our country, though born out of it; for instance, Missionaries or Preachers in it, or spiritual or temporal rulers, or founders of religious institutions or houses.

"He has also included in the Series a few eminent or holy persons, who, though not in the Sacred Catalogue, are recommended to our religious memory by their fame, learning, or the benefits they have conferred on posterity. These have been distinguished from the Saints by printing their names in italics.

"It is proposed to page all the longer Lives separately, the shorter will be thrown together in one. They will be published in monthly issues of not more than 128 pages each; and no regularity, whether of date or of subject, will be observed in the order of publication. But they will be so numbered as to admit ultimately of a general chronological arrangement.

"The separate writers are distinguished by letters subjoined to each Life; and it should be added, to prevent misapprehension, that, since under the present circumstances of our Church they are necessarily of various, though not divergent, doctrinal opinions, no one is answerable for any composition but his own. At the same

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time, the work professing an historical and ethical character, questions of theology will be, as far as possible, thrown into the background.

"J. H. N.

"LITTLEMORE, *September* 9, 1843."

When he reprinted his Calendar and Chronological Arrangement of the English Saints in 1865, Newman prefixed to it the following note:—

"It is but a first Essay, and has many obvious imperfections, but it may be useful to others as a step towards a complete hagiography for England. For instance, St. Osberga is omitted; I suppose because it was not easy to learn anything about her. Boniface of Canterbury is inserted, though passed over by the Bollandists on the ground of the absence of proof of a *cultus* having been paid to him. The Saints of Cornwall were too numerous to be attempted. Among the men of note, not Saints, King Edward II. is included, from piety towards the Founder of Oriel College."

Such then was the object and origin of this the first series of Saints' Lives written and published by members of the Reformed Church of England. It was to illustrate the continuity of that Church with its mediæval predecessor; though, as will have been noticed, in the first half of the second paragraph of the prospectus, it is rather England herself than the English Church that Newman seems to consider as hallowed by saintly associations. Wiseman's article on the Donatists had convinced him that the true line of Anglican

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defence lay in the assertion of this continuity; and, though the Church revival of the last fifty years has made us almost too familiar with the idea —for modern High Churchmen persistently press the claim far beyond what the facts of the Reformation period warrant—it must not be overlooked that the notion bore an air of novelty that aroused suspicion in 1843.

And to this account of the genesis of the undertaking we may add, also for the most part in Newman's own words, an account of how the first publications were received, and how the scheme was abandoned when only a tithe of it had been completed:—

"As soon as the first of the Series got into print[1] the whole project broke down. I had already anticipated that some portions of the Series would be written in a style inconsistent with the professions of a beneficed clergyman, and therefore I had given up my Living; but men of great weight went further when they saw the Life of St. Stephen Harding, and decided that it was of such a character as to be inconsistent even with its being given to the world by an Anglican publisher; and so the scheme was given up at once. After the first two parts[2] I retired from the Editorship; and those Lives only were published in addition which were then already finished or in advanced preparation. The following passages from what I or others

[1] The Life of St. Stephen Harding, by J. B. Dalgairns, which also comes first in this edition.

[2] The volume entitled "The Family of St. Richard," with which the second volume of this edition opens, was the second part published.

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wrote at the time will illustrate what I have been saying:—

"In November 1844, I wrote thus to one of the authors of them: 'I am not Editor; I have no direct control over the Series. It is Toovey's work; he may admit what he pleases, and exclude what he pleases. I was to have been Editor. I did edit the two first numbers. I was responsible for them in the way in which an Editor is responsible. Had I continued Editor I should have exercised a control over all. I laid down in the Preface that doctrinal subjects were, if possible, to be excluded. But, even then, I also set down that no writer was to be held answerable for any of the Lives but his own. When I gave up the Editorship I had various engagements with friends for separate Lives remaining in my hands. I should have liked to have broken from them all; but there were some from which I could not break, and I let them take their course. Some have come to nothing; others, like yours, have gone on. I have seen such, either in MS. or Proof. As time goes on I shall have less and less to do with the Series. I think the engagement between you and me should come to an end. I have anyhow abundant responsibility on me, and too much. I shall write to Toovey that if he wants the advantage of your assistance, he must write to you direct.'

"In accordance with this letter I had already advertised in January 1844, ten months before it, that 'other Lives,' after St. Stephen Harding, 'will be published by their respective authors on their

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own responsibility.' This notice is repeated in February, in the advertisement to the second volume, entitled 'The Family of St. Richard'; though to this volume also, for some reason, I also put my initials. In the Life of St. Augustine, the author, a man of nearly my own age, says in like manner, 'No one but himself is responsible for the way in which these materials have been used.' I have in MS. another advertisement to the same effect; but I cannot tell whether it was ever put into print.

"I will add, since the authors have been considered hot-headed boys, whom I was in charge of, and whom I suffered to do intemperate things, that, while the writer of St. Augustine was of the mature age which I have stated, most of the others were on one side or other of thirty. Three were under twenty-five. Moreover, of these writers, some became Catholics, some remained Anglicans, and others have professed what are called free or liberal opinions."

The characteristic outburst in the letter to "one of the authors," dated Nov. 1844, which Newman himself quoted in his *Apologia*, cannot fail to recall to any one who ever had anything to do with him in literary matters the strange admixture of sorrow and fear, amazement and amusement, yet always predominated by admiration and affection, which his vehemence and petulance on such an occasion would arouse. The fourth Note in the Appendix to the original edition of the *Apologia* further illustrates this side of this wonderful man. It is a spirited reply to Kingsley's criticisms on these

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Saints' Lives, and it must be read in its entirety for its full effect to be felt. It extends over twelve pages, and is too long to be quoted here; but some sentences contained in it will serve to complete our view of Newman's connection with the Series, and will also aptly introduce some reflections on the value, historical or ethical, of Hagiology, and of these "Lives of the English Saints" in particular. He insists on the fragmentary character of the work, and of the slenderness of his own control over it. It was to have consisted of almost 300 Lives, but only 33 were actually written and published. "It was brought to an end before it was well begun by the act of friends, who were frightened at the first Life printed." As to the age of the contributors to the Series, enough has perhaps already been quoted; but to Kingsley's specific charge that Newman had employed in the work, but had not sufficiently controlled, as he easily might have done, "hot-headed, fanatic young men," his reply is hardly convincing, as the two elderly writers whom he marshals against his foe were never actual contributors:—"As to the juvenile writers in the proposed Series, one was my friend Mr. Bowden, who in 1843 was a man of 46 years old; he was to have written St. Boniface; another was Mr. Johnson, a man of 42; he was to have written St. Aldelm." He is more successful in his criticism on Kingsley's attack on the Series as a whole, when out of thirty-three Lives published he had only dealt with three—St. Augustine of Canterbury, St. Neot, and St. Walburga—and of these three he had ad-

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mitted that the Life of St. Neot was "charming. The author treats the legends openly as legends and myths, and tells them as they stand, without asking the reader to believe in them. . . . The method is harmless enough if the legends had stood alone, but dangerous enough when they stand side by side with stories told in earnest, like that of St. Walburga." Newman felt himself specially bound to defend this last-named biography, as it was one of those which he had initialled as Editor. We need not, however, concern ourselves with his elaborate defence of the legend of the "medicinal oil" which her relics are said to have exuded for over 1000 years, and of which he had some in his possession in 1864. But his general estimate of the value of this Life of St. Walburga is very much to our purpose, as warranting a view of the ethical and æsthetic value of hagiology, apart from its real or supposed "historicity," that is worth maintaining now. It is, he says, "beautifully written and full of poetry. It bears on its very surface the profession of a legendary and mythical character."

Now, the "Lives of the Saints," these and others, form an apt and striking illustration of Goethe's memorable dictum that Poetry and Truth—*Dichtung und Wahrheit*—are inextricably commingled in biography, even in autobiography. Even when we attempt to write our own lives, we cannot fail to idealise somewhat, although we may be honestly striving to give a veracious account of things known more accurately to ourselves than to any one else. "Poetry" indeed may be too ambitious

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a term to apply to those soothing fictions which we should almost unconsciously interweave with the story of our career, but they would be at least akin to poetry in the fact of their origin in thoughtful reverence, albeit the object of that reverence is oneself. And, if this be true if the work be autobiography, it will be truer still where one man attempts to depict with reverence the life of another, known to him whether by observation or from hearsay, or from the study of records. The scope of his ignorance will always be much wider than the scope of his knowledge; and a proportion of pious fiction, or of poetry, will enter into his narrative, not indeed by way of incident (unless he be purposely and avowedly extending the narrative, as Milton does), in regard to which he may sternly confine himself to what he believes to be attested facts, but by way of atmosphere in which his subject moves. In this way every biography is coloured by the preconceptions of the writer, and so far is inaccurate. The relation of history to truth, even the history of yesterday as recorded in the daily papers, depends, as we all know, largely, not so much on the veracity as on the mind of the writer; and this is no less true of biography; indeed it is likely to be more markedly true, for the personal interest of the subject affects the writer's judgment, however determined he may be to write impartially.

And especially are these considerations applicable to the Lives of the Saints. It is ordinarily characteristic of a Saint that he or she has lived a "hidden life," around which, even contempo-

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raneously, a halo of romance has spread. It is also true, though perhaps less important, that they mostly lived in days long past, of which the records are scanty and seldom verifiable. To present an accurate picture of a life so lived, and at such a date, is obviously impossible. Poetry, in the sense of idealisation, must come to the rescue if the few dry bones are to live; but that hagiology is devoid of truth, because of the part that the imagination has played in its construction, can only be maintained by those who know no truth but the truth of concrete facts. Truth, however, to put it briefly, is to be found in the ideal as much as or more than in the real; and, thus regarded, a Saint's Life that owes its impressiveness largely to the holy imaginings of successive editors, may convey important truths, and be far more serviceable for the inspiration and guidance of conduct, than any precise account of events, that did really occur as stated, is likely to be. We live by admiration, hope, and fear, more than by mere knowledge of actual facts; and the highest, holiest thoughts by which those sentiments are inspired are not the less efficacious on account of the fact (if such it be) that they have never yet been translated into action by performance on any earthly stage. And these considerations are as applicable to Scripture as they are to hagiology. There are many good people who affirm that, so far as they are concerned, there would be no moral value or significance in the stories (for example) of the Fall, or of Abraham and Isaac, or of Job, or of the prophet Jonah, if the things we are told about

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them did not actually occur. But surely, the original source of the inspiration of them lies in the Divine thought of them, and not in the performance of them on earth, still less in any bare and perishable records of such events, if they did actually occur. And that such thoughts were, at one time or another, revealed to the hearts and minds of holy men of old, there never can be any doubt: such imperfection as there is lies, not in the thoughts themselves, but in the records of them; while by a continuous inspiration, lasting throughout the ages, the thoughts themselves may and do acquire greater elevation; and even the contents of the records can to some extent be corrected with the advance of knowledge.

This, however, is a wide subject, that can only be touched upon here; and these considerations apply more especially to very early legends, such as are everywhere found interwoven with the origins of a nation or of a religion; they are less applicable, but they cannot be altogether left out of sight, when we are dealing with the moral value of Saints' Lives, such as are mostly those which these volumes contain. With the exception of one or two of the earliest lives, which are probably baptized Pagan legends,[1] and are of no historical value, there is in all an element of historicity; while in most the historical element is predominant and well ascertained; but there is doubtless in all of them some admixture of the ideal; and it is this that causes some people, who ought to

[1] On this subject see Eckenstein, "Woman under Monasticism," chap. i. § 2, "The Tribal Goddess as a Christian Saint."

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know better, to fall foul of these Lives, and indeed of all hagiology, and to denounce it as intellectually degrading. Much depends, no doubt, on the way in which the narratives are proposed for our acceptance (and it must be admitted that the narrators do too often set forth as historical much that has clearly no claim to be so regarded), but more depends on our own moral attitude towards them. There is no need to be credulous, but there is great need to be tolerant; while a captious, sceptical temper is altogether out of place, and should be employed elsewhere, say in medical or some other physical science.[1]

History stands on a different basis, and calls for more sympathetic treatment. And it is a little singular that Charles Kingsley, who was very tolerant, even appreciative, of the quaint fancies of mystical interpretation which find the New Testament latent in the Old, should in his controversy with Newman have pounced upon these Lives, or on some of them, and have denounced them as "a public outrage on historic truth and on plain common sense," whereas "they ought to have been books to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, and to make the present generation acknowledge and respect the true sanctity which there was, in spite of all mistakes, in those great

[1] Newman aptly quotes Grote ("History of Greece," vol. ii. 455), as pointing out how easily a sceptical attitude of mind towards the records which teach us what we know of Lycurgus would lead us to discredit his existence altogether. And Thirlwall says ("History of Greece," vol. i. 332): "Experience proves that scarcely any amount of variation, as to the time or circumstances of a fact, in the authors who record it, can be a sufficient ground for doubting its reality."

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men of old—a sanctity founded on true virtue and true piety, which required no tawdry representative of lying and ridiculous wonders." It was, in fact, the miraculous element, inextricably interwoven with nearly all these narratives, which aroused this somewhat theatrical outburst of Protestant wrath; but Newman was fully justified in replying, as every modern critic would now, that this objection is as applicable to the contents of the Bible as it is to the Lives of the Saints. To Kingsley, of course, the Bible was a thing apart, not open to the criticism which almost every one feels free to apply to it now; while, at the date that he wrote (1864), the physical science people were in the heyday of their triumph; and, holding that all things knowable were already almost exhaustively known, they would allow no place for the apparently abnormal (termed by some the miraculous), such as would readily be granted to-day by men of science, who admit that forces unknown a generation ago are now recognisable, and that others, yet unrecognised, probably await discovery. It was, in fact, premature to pronounce judgment on the accuracy of certain details, which the writers of these Lives thought, and rightly thought, they could not justifiably omit, because they were part and parcel of the stories that they had to tell; and readers of this new edition, who happily breathe an atmosphere less heavily charged on the one hand with vain enthusiasm for the past and ungenerous contempt for the present, and with intense suspicion and angry intolerance on the other, will doubtless be glad that the Lives were frankly

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portrayed by their authors, as they were believed to have been lived by those who were in a position to know most about them.[1] There are, of course, limits to this tolerance. It does not tend to edification to have mere silliness served up as sanctity. But good taste and good sense will find no difficulty in indicating these limits; and it is perhaps specially characteristic of this particular Series that, as the work of University men, it is marked, almost uniformly, by scholarly taste and judgment.

And, in view of this general excellence, it has not been thought worth while in this edition to attempt any revision of the text or to make any additions to it. The Lives, as they stand, are an interesting memorial of a critical period in the history of the Church of England; and this special character they would lose if they were tampered with in any way. Recently the Rev. Herbert Thurston, S.J., put forth a new edition of the "Life of St. Stephen Harding," by J. B. Dalgairns, which was the first of the Series issued, and which also comes first in the present reprint; and although, as was to be expected, his notes are interesting and show no little independent knowledge of the history of the times, so far as revision went there was little to be done, and the substitution of the Douai Version for the Authorised in one or two of the longer quotations is hardly an

[1] Newman again aptly quotes from Milman ("Latin Christianity," vol. i. 388): "History, to be true, must condescend to speak the language of legend; the belief of the times is part of the record of the times; and though there may occur what may baffle its more calm and searching philosophy, it must not disdain that which was the primal, almost universal, motive of human life."

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improvement. In point of fact, neither Dalgairns nor Faber (who were the two chief contributors to the Series) wrote in later years anything better than what they wrote here under Newman's direction. Of Newman himself it was remarked by a very competent critic, Mr. Richard Holt Hutton, that after his submission to Rome his pen seemed to acquire a vigour and a liveliness that it had not possessed before. He awaked as one out of sleep; and, like a giant refreshed with wine, he smote his enemies (Kingsley first and ultimately Ward) in the hinder parts, and put them to a perpetual shame. But with Faber it was otherwise. There is a sobriety allied with eloquence and sympathy in his contributions to these "Lives of the English Saints" which will be looked for in vain in the series which he subsequently edited, the "Oratorian Lives of the Saints," mostly translated from the Italian. They are the veritable tipsy-cake of hagiology, being disfigured by extravagances calculated to bring this department of biography into deserved contempt. To be really edifying and attractive the "Lives of the Saints" need to be re-written in each age in accordance with the learning and temper and taste of the time. Pruning and adaptation are necessary, and the latest recension will almost certainly be the best, if it be the work of a competent hand. About five years ago the Department of History in the University of Pennsylvania put forth a small volume of "Monastic Tales of the Thirteenth Century" as one of a series of illustrations of the original sources of European history. The tales were

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bare translations from monastic chronicles, with all their *naïveté* and crudeness and (in some cases) coarseness untouched. To read them was to carry away an impression of childishness and folly. And yet the pen of a poetic interpreter could doubtless have transformed even this dross into gold. But the legends of antiquity are not really an inspiring study for the modern world, until their significance has been perceived by some really inspired man, who knows what to omit as well as what to preserve, and who is able to present to his own generation, perhaps in a somewhat archaic dress, as best suited to the subject, but still in sympathetic touch with modern ideas, the kernel of eternal truth which the legends enshrine, though often rather obscuring it. This is what Richard Wagner has done in our own day with some of the most primitive Teutonic tales, cutting off mediæval accretions, and showing us the very heart of the legends, with accessories of poetry and of other arts, that have compelled even the indifferent to acknowledge their spiritual power. Hereafter a similar service may be done for other legends, religious or national, which are temporarily under a cloud, now that their lack of historicity has been detected.

Newman and his disciples did not, of course, approach hagiology in anything like this spirit. They came rather as uncritical, some would say even as credulous, believers. But in a limited fashion they did interpret to their own age certain truths to which mediæval legends bear witness, and which had been largely forgotten in our own

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Church and country. It may be true that in the ancient Catholic Church the value of the so-called "counsels of perfection" had been pressed unduly, and that voluntary poverty, chastity, and obedience had in practice relegated to the background the necessity of other manlier Christian virtues; but it is no less certain that these things form a part of the original Gospel, and that in the Church of England, together with fasting and almsgiving as ordinary religious duties, they had for generations been forgotten. The tendency of the Lives was to call these things to remembrance, and to arouse (as Newman had designed) a sense of historical continuity with the past; and we know how (as matters of minor but yet of some importance) a recognition of the beauty and significance of Catholic ritual, of the functions of architecture and of other arts in religion, accompanied the revival of almost obsolete and evangelical ideas. The picture presented was no doubt one-sided and altogether too sombre; but that was characteristic of the Tractarian movement as a whole. Undergraduates, who would have been doing God's service better in the cricket-field or on the river, would meet in one another's rooms to discuss unprofitable and interminable technicalities concerning the doctrine of grace, or anxiously to inquire how pardon was to be assured for post-baptismal sin. And such a habit of mind was certainly encouraged by these Lives in those who took them too seriously, and who (some of them) indulged in penitential austerities that impaired health, and were even a risk to life. It was unfor-

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tunate that the Series seemed to suggest that Saints were chiefly, if not exclusively, to be looked for in the hermitage or in the cloister, and especially under the severest of all rules, that of the Cistercians. Presumably it was the recent foundation by Mr. Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle, of Mount St. Bernard's Monastery, in Leicestershire, that turned the writers' thoughts in this direction. But, happily, there is no likelihood that the republication of the Lives now will lead to any such misconception. Contemporary disciples of Tractarianism, whether Roman or Anglo-Catholics, are not extravagant ascetics; and Newman, Faber, and Dalgairns, foremost in their monastic rigidity while at Littlemore, were happy in finding in St. Philip Neri a more genial and winning type of sanctity when they had crossed the border; and some verses from the former's two "songs," in honour of the Founder of the Oratory, may fitly close this Introduction:—

"The holy monks, concealed from men
In midnight choir or studious cell,
In sultry field or wintry glen,
The holy monks, I love them well.

Yet there is one I more affect
Than Jesuit, hermit, monk, or friar,
'Tis an old man of sweet aspect,
I love him more, I more admire.

This is the Saint of gentleness and kindness,
Cheerful in penance and in precept winning;
Patiently healing of their pride and blindness
Souls that are sinning.

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Love is his bond, he knows no other fetter,
  Asks not our all, but takes whate'er we spare him,
Willing to draw us on from good to better,
        As we can bear him.

Thus he conducts, by holy paths and pleasant,
  Innocent souls and sinful souls forgiven
Towards the bright palace, where our God is present,
        Throned in high heaven."

ARTHUR WOLLASTON HUTTON.

EASTHOPE RECTORY,
  MUCH WENLOCK,
    March 22, 1900.

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LIFE OF

ST. STEPHEN HARDING

ABBOT OF CITEAUX, AB. 1066–1134

And Founder of the Cistercian Order

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ADVERTISEMENT

THE following pages were printed with the view of forming one of a series of Lives of English Saints, according to a prospectus which appeared in the course of last autumn, but which has since, for private reasons, been superseded. As it is not the only work undertaken in pursuance of the plan then in contemplation, it is probable that, should it meet with success, other Lives, now partly written, will be published in a similar form by their respective authors on their own responsibility.

The Author wishes me to notice that since his Life of St. Stephen has been in type, he has discovered that he has partly gone over the same ground as the learned Mr. Maitland in his Papers on the Dark Ages. In consequence, as might have been expected, the same facts in many instances occur in both.

J. H. N.

LITTLEMORE, *January* 1844.

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LIFE OF

ST. STEPHEN HARDING

CHAPTER I

ST. STEPHEN IN YOUTH

HOLY men of old who have written the lives of saints, universally begin by professing their unworthiness to be the historians of the marvellous deeds which the Holy Spirit has wrought in the Church. What then should we say, who in these miserable times, from the bosom of our quiet homes, or in the midst of our literary ease, venture to celebrate the glories of the Saints? We have much that is amiable and domestic amongst us, but Saints, the genuine creation of the cross, with their supernatural virtues, are now to us a matter of history. Nay, we cannot give up all for Christ, if we would; and while other portions of the Church can suffer for His sake, we must find our cross in sitting still, to watch in patience the struggle which is going on about us. Yet while we wait for better days, we may comfort ourselves with the contemplation of what her sons once

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were, and admire their virtues, though we have not the power, even though we had the will, to imitate them. The English character has an earnestness and reality about it, capable of appreciating and of following out the most perfect way. Not only was the whole island once covered with fair monasteries, but it sent forth into foreign lands men who became the light of foreign monastic orders. Thus the Saint whose life we have undertaken to write was one of the first founders of the Cistercian order, and the spiritual father of St. Bernard. Little as is known of the early years of St. Stephen, all his historians especially dwell on one fact, that he was an Englishman. The date and place of his birth, and the names of his parents, are alike unknown; but his name, Harding, seems to show that he was of Saxon blood, and he is said to have been of noble birth; it also seems probable that he was born rather before than after the Norman Conquest. His earthly parentage, and all that he had given up for Christ's sake, is forgotten; and he first appears, as a boy, brought up from his earliest years[1] in the monastery of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire. The rule of St. Benedict[2] allows parents to offer up children under fourteen years of age at God's altar, to serve Him to the end of their days in the cloister. In those lawless times, when temptations to acts of violence and rapine and reckless profligacy were so great, holy parents thought that they could not better protect the purity of their children than by placing

[1] William of Malmesbury, Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. iv. [2] C. 59.

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them at once under the shadow of a monastery. Just as they had already in their name taken the solemn vows of baptism at the font, so they brought their children into the church of the convent, led them up into the sanctuary, and wrapping their hands in the linen cloth which covered the altar, gave them up solemnly to the service of God. At the same time, they took an oath never to endow them with any of their goods; they then left them with perfect security in the keeping of the superior, to follow their Lord with a light step, unencumbered by worldly possessions. The discipline to which St. Stephen was thus subjected from his earliest years was of the most careful kind. No prince could be brought up with greater care in a king's palace, than were these children offered up in the monastery, whether they were noble or low-born. The greatest pains were taken that the sight and even the knowledge of evil should be kept from them; they were instructed in reading, writing, and religious learning, but above all in music and psalmody. But the greater portion of their time was spent in the services of the Church, in which various constitutions of the order appoint them a principal part. Stephen thus spent his childhood, like Samuel, in the courts of the Lord's house, amidst the beauty and variety of the ceremonies with which the peaceful round of monastic life was diversified. About a hundred years before his time, St. Dunstan had roused anew the spirit of the Benedictines in England, which had in many places fallen into decay; and according to his constitutions the monastery of Sherborne was

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governed. In every part of his minute rules for the order of divine service, the part of the children brought up in the convent appears foremost; and there is a joyousness, and at the same time a sort of homeliness, in some of them, which shows how much he consulted the English character. All the uproarious merriment of the nation he tames down by turning it into something ecclesiastical. Bell-ringing, for instance, is ever occurring in his rule, and in one place it directs that at mass, nocturns, and vespers, from the Feast of the Innocents till the Circumcision, all the bells should be rung, as was the custom in England; "for the honest and godly customs of this country, which we have learnt from the wont of our ancestors, we have determined by no means to reject, but in every case to confirm them."[1] Processions also from church to church, when the weather was fine, were frequent; and these were often headed by the children of the monastery. Thus on Palm Sunday the whole community quitted the convent walls, and walked in procession, clad in albs, to some neighbouring church, with the children at their head. On arriving at their destination, the palms were blessed and the young choristers intoned the antiphons, and all quitted the church with palms in their hands. On returning to the church, the procession stopped before the porch, and the children, who walked first, chanted the *Gloria Laus*, after which, as the response *Ingrediente Domino* was raised by the cantor, the doors of

[1] Reg. Conc. c. 3.

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the church were thrown open, and the whole line moved in to hear Mass. Such scenes as these must have sunk deep into a mind like Stephen's, and he might have lived and died in the peaceful monastery of Sherborne. But God had other designs for His servant, and in his youth he quitted the convent for the sake of finishing his studies. From the words of St. Benedict's rule, it seems to have been intended that children received into a monastery should be considered as having taken the vows through their parents, and as dedicated to God until their life's end. Monastic discipline was not then considered so dreadful as it is now thought to have been; nor was this world looked upon as so very sweet that it was an act of madness to quit it for God's service. Rather, they were thought happy to whom God had given the grace of a monastic vocation, and they surely were called by Him to the happy seclusion of the cloister, who were placed there by their parents' will; just as now we find that the wish of a father and mother decides on the profession or state of life of their child. Besides, monastic vows are in one sense only the completion of the vows of baptism; and it was not thought unnatural that those who, while the child was perfectly unconscious, placed him in contact with the world unseen, implied by baptism, should also put him in the way of best fulfilling the vows to which they themselves had bound him in his infancy. This was probably St. Benedict's view; but before Stephen's time, custom had in some cases relaxed the rule. St. Benedict seems not to have contemplated the case of a monk's

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ever leaving his monastery, except when despatched on the business of the convent. Each religious house was to be perfect in itself, and to contain, if possible, all the necessary arts of life, so that its inmates need very rarely go beyond its walls. Least of all does he seem to have thought that a monk could quit the cloister for the acquisition of learning; the end of monastic life was to follow Christ in perfect poverty and obedience; monks tilled the ground with their own hands, and wrought their food out of the hard soil by the sweat of their brow; they were therefore in very many cases what we should call rude and ignorant men, unskilled in worldly learning, though well versed in the science of divine contemplation. The natural force of circumstances, however, made the cloister the rallying-point of learning, and monks often quitted their own convents in order to perfect themselves in the sciences.[1] The active mind of Stephen longed for more than the poor monastery of Sherborne could afford him. He first travelled into Scotland, which at that time was the general refuge of all of Saxon race from the power of the Conqueror. It was governed by Malcolm III., who in 1070 married Margaret, a daughter of the English blood royal, and the grand-niece of St. Edward the Confessor. Her gentle virtues smoothed the rough manners of the nation, and the holy austerity of her life

[1] Instances will be found in Mabillon, Tract de Studiis monasticis, c. 16. In the Cistercian order Otto of Frisingen was sent to Paris after his profession, and that from Morimond, a monastery founded by and under the control of St. Stephen. Manriquez, 1127, 2. V. also the case of St. Wilfrid; Bede, Eccl. Hist. v. 20.

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gave her such an ascendency over them, that she banished many horrid customs which Christianity had as yet failed in uprooting. It was probably the peace which her holiness shed around her in Scotland which attracted Stephen thither; it formed a favourable contrast to the distracted state of England, which was suffering from the effects of the Conquest, and where a Saxon monastery could not be safe from the aggressions of their Norman lord. From Scotland he bent his steps to Paris.

Up to this time Stephen's life had been one of tranquillity, spent in the peace of a monastery or in the acquisition of learning. But he seems now to be entering on the rougher portion of his career; he had not yet found out his vocation, and with that untiring energy of which his after-life showed so many proofs was looking out for it. He was the disciple of a crucified Lord, and his brethren all through the world were fighting; how then could he rest in peace? He left Paris and undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, at that time a journey of great danger and difficulty, when the roads were not smoothed by all the contrivances of modern travelling. Forests had not been cleared nor mountains cut through; and the towns and villages were far distant from each other, so that the poor pilgrims had often to depend on the hospitality of the monks and religious houses to find food and a night's rest after a long day's journey on foot or on horseback. A heavy rain was a most serious inconvenience, for it converted the road into a deep mass of mud,[1] flooded the rivers and

[1] Petrus Ven. Ep. 6, 46.

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broke down the bridges. Another great danger was the bands of robbers who infested the forests, and the frequent wars which devastated the lands. The castle of a lawless baron, or an encounter with any of the numerous bands of soldiers which crossed the country in every direction in war time, was a most serious obstacle to the defenceless traveller; no religious character could protect him, for we find that monasteries were burnt and churches pillaged with as little scruple as if the combatants were heathen Normans instead of Christians. On one occasion all the bishops and abbots of France were attacked on their way from the council of Pisa, by some petty lord; some thrown from their mules, some detained prisoners, and all rifled and plundered notwithstanding their sacred character. A lonely pilgrim like Stephen would not be likely to find much mercy at such hands: undeterred by the dangers of the way, he set out with but one companion, a clerk, whose name is unknown. Rome was the bourn to which the hearts of all Englishmen naturally turned at that day across the wide tract of land and sea which separated them. Stephen had the thoughts of many illustrious examples before him to cheer him on his way; many a Saxon king had laid aside his crown and gone to assume the monastic habit at Rome. The venerable Bede, in relating one of these events, says that it was only what many of the English, noble and low-born, clerks and laymen, men and women, vied with each other in doing;[1] and their enthusiastic feelings are recorded

[1] Bede, Eccl. Hist. v. 7.

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in that saying which occurs so strangely in Bede's Collectanea,[1] or Commonplace-Book, "When the Coliseum falls, Rome shall fall; when Rome falls, the world shall fall." England had never forgotten, that whatever Rome might be to the rest of the world, it was her mother church; from the earliest times there was an English school in Rome, and some Saxon king, tradition said Ina, had built a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, which belonged to the English, and where Saxon pilgrims who died at Rome were buried. Stephen was, therefore, as much at home in St. Peter's when once he got to Rome, as he would have been in Westminster Abbey; recollections of his native kings would meet him wherever he went; there he might see the place where Alfred, when a boy of seven years old, was anointed king by Leo IV.; and in "the street of the Saxons," where the English pilgrims lived, stood St. Mary's Church, in which was the tomb of Burrhed, the last of the Mercian princes. Stephen, on his way to Rome, never forgot that he was a monk; it was no idle curiosity which led him so far over the sea and across the Alps. It was to imitate to the letter the life of Him who came down from heaven to be a poor man, and who had not where to lay His head; he thus courted cold, and hunger, and nakedness, that he might follow step by step the Virgin Lamb, as a stranger and pilgrim upon earth. In these times, an Englishman in quitting his country finds, instead of the one home everywhere, altars at which he can only kneel as an alien, and travelling

[1] Bede, ed. Col. tom. iii. 483.

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is therefore to us generally a source of dissipation. Stephen, however, found brethren wherever he went, from the parish church and the wayside chapel to the cathedral of the metropolitan city.

Still the bustle of moving from place to place, and a perpetual change of scene, are apt under the best circumstances to distract the mind from that state of habitual devotion in which it ought to rest. Good habits are very hard to gain, but very easy to lose; and nothing is so likely to destroy them as a mode of life in which every turn of the road develops something new. To guard against this danger, our pilgrims set themselves a rule, which none but the most ardent devotion could conceive. Throughout the whole of their long journey, whether they were in a crowded city, in the wilds of a forest, or clambering up the Alps, they recited together daily the whole of the Psalter. At the same time it is expressly said that they did not neglect the works of mercy, which God gave them an opportunity of doing. Thus they went on their way chanting the praises of God, and walking with a joyful heart over the thorns and briers which obstructed their path; doing good as they went to their fellow-pilgrims, and to all sufferers, of whom in those times of violence there was no lack. The road which they travelled was not an unfrequented one; and they might have found much to distract their attention if they had chosen to detach their minds from their holy occupation. They not only met the lowly pilgrim who like themselves had left his home out of devotion; but many a bishop and abbot, too often with a lordly train, hastening to

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have his cause judged at Rome, would overtake and pass them by; or else they would meet the young clerk, high in hopes, going to seek his fortune as an adventurer at the Roman court.[1] Many a more congenial companion, however, travelled the same way; their alternate chanting of the Psalms was at least not so singular as to be ostentatious; at each of the hours the monk was bound to descend from his horse, pulled off his gloves and his cowl, and, falling on his knees, made the sign of the cross; then, after saying the Pater Noster, Deus in adjutorium, and Gloria Patri, he mounted his horse and finished the office on horseback.[2] English monks especially, when they travelled, said the usual night hours during the day, so that other voices besides those of our pilgrims were heard chanting in the open air as they journeyed to Rome. There were pilgrims of another sort, who, unlike Stephen and his companion, had undertaken the journey to expiate some dreadful crime; some even walked with small and cutting chains of iron round their bodies,[3] in hopes of obtaining absolution from the successor of St. Peter.

There was then many an object, both good and bad, to arrest the attention of our pilgrims on the way, and to call for their sympathy. The road to Rome was an indication of what the city was itself; it was the head of the Catholic Church, and, like the Church, had both a heavenly and an earthly aspect. In one sense it was Christ's kingdom, hold-

[1] V. Hildebertus, Ep. 3, 24, for a specimen of a letter of recommendation to the papal court.

[2] Statuta Lanfranci, c. 15.

[3] Ducange, Peregrinatio.

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ing in its hands His interests, and dispensing His mysteries; in another sense it was an earthly kingdom, with earthly interests and intrigues, the rich, powerful, and intellectual thronging its gates and endeavouring to gain the honours and the wealth which it had to dispense; and then, again, through this motley scene, it was Christ's kingdom working, and bringing good out of the selfishness and the avarice of men, to the wonder of the angels who look on. It was in this twofold point of view that Rome was looked upon in Stephen's time; thus, on the one hand, William of Malmesbury,[1] a contemporary writer, speaks in bitter terms of the Romans as "the laziest of men, bartering justice for gold, selling the rule of the canons for a price"; and in the next page he goes on to enumerate with enthusiasm its heavenly treasures, the bodies of numberless martyrs, who rested in its bosom. If ever there was a turbulent, seditious populace, it was that of Rome; its nobles, fierce and bloody tyrants; its cardinals, too often purpled princes; but then, too, it was the principal treasure-house of Christ's blessings on earth, the centre of Catholic communion, and the rallying-point of all that was good; and if sometimes the side of injustice, amidst the multiplicity of causes which flowed into it, triumphed, still there was a mighty energy in its good, which at length brought good out of evil; and at all events there was ever room for the poor pilgrim to kneel at the tomb of the Apostles, from whence he went back on his way rejoicing.

[1] Lib. iv. Gest. Reg. Angl.

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This was Stephen's object in going to Rome; he thought that his prayers would be most likely to be heard if he knelt near that body the very shadow of which healed the sick, and which was often so close to our most blessed Lord; and, again, at the tomb which contained that precious body which gave virtue to handkerchiefs and aprons, and which bore the marks of the Lord Jesus, and by its sufferings had filled up what was behindhand of the afflictions of our Lord for His Church's sake. How Stephen's prayers were answered we shall soon see.

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CHAPTER II

STEPHEN AT MOLESME

STEPHEN was returning from his pilgrimage with his faithful companion, probably on his way back to Sherborne, when God conducted his steps to the place which was to be the scene of his labours. As he was travelling through a dark forest in the diocese of Langres in Burgundy,[1] he came to a poor monastery situated on the side of a sloping hill, on the right bank of the little river Leignes. It could hardly be called a monastery, for it was a collection of huts, built by the monks themselves, of the boughs of trees, which they had cut down with their own hands, surrounding a small wooden oratory. Around this little knot of huts, more like an encampment than a settled dwelling, was an open space in the forest, which the monks had cleared, and which had been given them by a neighbouring baron. The brethren had no means of subsistence but the produce of this piece of ground, which they tilled with their own hands, and they were as much dependent upon it as the poorest serf who gained his own livelihood by the

[1] As late as Martenne's time, the road to Molesme was so intricate, that he and his companions lost their way in the wood, and only arrived at the convent gate very late at night. Voy. Litt. part i. p. 185.

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sweat of his brow; yet amongst this poor brotherhood were men of noble birth and of high intellectual attainments. The monastery had only been established a short time, and was struggling with all the difficulties which beset an infant community. Its history is a curious one, as showing how the reckless fury of the times was beaten down by an element of good even more energetic than the evil which it had to encounter. Two brothers of noble birth were one day riding through a solitary place in a forest not far from Molesme, called the Forest of Colan; both were armed, for they were riding to take part in a tournament,—a species of festivity, which with all its pageantry, its flutter of pennons and glittering of armour, was soon after condemned in strong terms by the Church.[1] They were both worldly men, whose only object was honour, in the pursuit of which they feared neither God nor man. As they were journeying on, the devil, aided by the solitude and darkness of the place, suggested horrid thoughts to each of them—of murdering the other in order to obtain his heritance, and it cost them a struggle to put the temptation down. Shortly afterwards, on returning from the tournament, they passed through the same place. The wicked thoughts which had attacked them in that spot rose to the mind of each, and each trembled secretly at the dreadful power which Satan possessed over his mind. Without revealing to each other their fears, they both hastened to the hut of a holy priest, who lived a hermit's life in the depths of the forest, and

[1] St. Bern. Ep. 376, Conc. Lat. ii. Canon 14.

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separately confessed their sin. They then revealed to each other the dreadful thoughts which had crossed their minds, and recognising that they could not serve God and Mammon, must either be like devils in wickedness or saints in holiness, they agreed to quit the world with all its honours, and to live in the forest under the direction of the holy hermit. The world soon heard of the conversion of these noble youths, who had quitted everything that it holds dear, to embrace a voluntary poverty, and to live a life of painful discipline; and a few others were induced to follow their example. At first they lived the life rather of hermits than of cœnobites; afterwards, as their number increased to seven, they determined on adopting the rule of St. Benedict, and looked around them for some one to instruct them in it. They turned their eyes on Robert, then Abbot of St. Michel de Tonnere, a monastery near the town of Tonnere, on the borders of Champagne and Burgundy. Robert, however, was at that time unable to leave his post, and the hermits of Colan were disappointed in their hopes of obtaining him. Not long after, however, he was compelled to leave St. Michel by the incorrigibly bad lives of the monks, and to return to Celle near Troyes, his original monastery, from whence he was soon elected Prior of St. Aigulphus. At this place the hermits again sought him, and this time they applied to Rome for an order from the pope, commanding him to undertake the direction of them. Alexander II., the then reigning pontiff, pleased with their persevering zeal, granted their request, and Robert quitted St. Aigulphus to preside

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over this infant community. Under his guidance they gained frequent accessions to the brotherhood; and when at last their numbers amounted to thirteen, St. Robert saw fit to remove their habitation from the forest of Colan to Molesme. The new monastery was founded in honour of the Blessed Virgin, on Sunday, the 20th of December, A.D. 1075. It was here that Stephen found the community, and he at once felt that he had reached the end of his wanderings. The place certainly had nothing tempting to common eyes. It is easy to conceive a person falling in love with what may be called the romance of monastic life: splendid architecture, a beautiful ceremonial, and, above all, religious peace and an absence of worldly cares, are legitimate compensations for all that monks give up for Christ's sake. But at Molesme even these attractions were wanting. The monks, like St. Paul, worked with their own hands to get their daily bread; and so poor were they that even this was often lacking, and they were obliged at times to live wholly on vegetables. They were visibly dependent on God's providence for their daily bread; and seeking first the kingdom of God, they trusted that their scanty food and raiment would be added to them. It was their poverty which attracted Stephen; these few men serving God in the wild of the forest were the very realisation of the new order of things which was brought in by the cross of Christ, by which weakness was made strength and suffering sanctified to bring joy. They were the salt of the earth, preserving it from corruption by their supernatural

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virtues, and averting the anger of God from the sinful world. Here he found St. Benedict's rule carried out to the letter without any of the relaxations which had crept in through the lapse of time, and this we know from every one of Stephen's subsequent actions was the state of life at which he aimed in his own person, and which he tried to in others. This probably was the object of his prayers at St. Peter's tomb, and now they were answered, for he had thus lighted unexpectedly upon a place where he could follow after that perfection which he had already conceived in his heart.[1]

In thus quitting his original monastery and entering another, he was in no way violating his rule, for St. Benedict expressly allows an abbot to receive a monk of any distant monastery which was unknown to him; that is, as it is interpreted, he excludes monasteries which are so near as to admit of intercourse. But there was another difficulty, which it cost Stephen a painful struggle with himself to overcome. The devil often gathers all his powers to give battle to great saints, when they are on the eve of doing some action which is to be the turning-point of their lives; and so it was with Stephen. He felt a most bitter pang at parting from the clerk who had been the faithful companion of his pilgrimage. His affectionate heart, which from his early consecration to God's service at Sherborne, could hardly have known the love of

[1] Manriquez, Ann. Cist. Introd. c. 2, conjectures that he made a vow at Rome to embrace a more perfect mode of life.

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father, mother, brethren, or sisters, had it seems fixed itself so firmly on his friend, that now it was with great difficulty that he could tear himself away. He, however, vanquished in the struggle, and remained behind at Molesme, while his friend passed on. For this one friend whom he gave up, he at once found two others in Robert and Alberic, the abbot and prior of Molesme. Both of them were his companions in the more arduous struggles of his after-life; both have been, with him, held up by the Church to the veneration of the faithful, among the saints; and it was their joint work which he was afterwards left on earth to complete. When, however, Stephen joined them at Molesme, they were but simple monks, unknown to the world. Robert, the spiritual father of both Alberic and Stephen, was of one of the noblest families of Champagne; he had been a monk from a very early age, and had been distinguished for his adherence to the strict rule of St. Benedict; he had quitted the government of the abbey of St. Michel, as we have said above, and retired into a private station because of the incorrigible laxity of the monks. Alberic was one of the original seven hermits of Colan; he is described in the early history of Citeaux as "a man of learning, well skilled in things both divine and human, a lover of the rule and of the brethren."[1] These two walked hand in hand with Stephen in all the trials in which they soon found themselves involved. The monastery at times suffered from actual want; from the loneliness of the spot and

[1] Exord. Parv. Cist., c. 9.

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the fewness of visitors, they were quite forgotten by the world, and the alms of the faithful were turned into other channels. They continued, however, in cheerful faith, winning their livelihood out of the hard ground, and feeling sure that God would not desert them; and, indeed, they found that their faith was not misplaced. One day, as they were about to sit down to a scanty meal, after the hard labour of the day, the Bishop of Troyes arrived at the monastery with a considerable retinue. The poor monks felt ashamed that they could so miserably supply the needs of their illustrious visitor, but cheerfully divided with him their hard-won meal. The bishop went away from the monastery, wondering at the fervent piety of its inmates. For a long time nothing came of this visit, and the monks had probably forgotten it. Meanwhile the resources of the community became daily more straitened, till at last there were hardly provisions enough left to serve them for a few days. The brethren applied to St. Robert, and informed him of the state of the case. He bade them quietly trust in God, who would not leave His servants to perish in the solitude to which they had retired to serve Him. He ordered some of them to go to Troyes, which was much nearer to them than their own episcopal city of Langres, and bade them buy food, though he well knew that he had no money to give them. The exact conformity of their lives to the very letter of Scripture, made them look upon it as a solace and a counsel in the minutest points, in a way of which we have no conception; thus the words of Isaiah rose to St. Robert's mind, "Ye who have no

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money, hasten, come, and buy."[1] Encouraged by the faith of their abbot, the monks set out on their apparently hopeless journey. So long had the good brethren kept away from the world, that they forgot the singularity of their appearance. They were therefore surprised on entering the city that their naked feet, coarse habit, and features so worn with toil and watching that the fervent spirit seemed to shine through the flesh, attracted general attention. The news flew hastily round, till it reached the bishop's palace. He ordered them to be brought to his presence, and as soon as they entered recognised his hosts of Molesme. He received them with joy, took off their tattered habits, and sent them back with his blessing, and a waggon loaded with clothes and bread for their poor brethren at home. We may fancy the joy of the community when they saw their messengers return, not empty-handed as they went, but laden with the blessings which God had given them, as it were with His own hand, to reward their faith. This seems to have been nearly the last of their struggles with poverty, "for," says the monk who has written St. Robert's life,[2] "from that day forth there never was wanting to them a man to supply them with all that was necessary for food and clothing. And as they endured with the greatest constancy in God's service, many continually were added to their number, fugitives from the world, who, leaving their earthly burdens, placed their necks under the yoke of the Lord."

[1] Isa. lv. Vulg.

[2] V. Bollandists, April 29.

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CHAPTER III

MOLESME DEGENERATES

THE community of Molesme seemed now to be in a fair way of becoming the head of a new and flourishing congregation of the Benedictine order. It might even have rivalled Cluny, for many abbots prayed St. Robert to grant them some of his monks, by way of introducing into their own monasteries the reform of Molesme. It would have become what Citeaux was afterwards, had not the folly of the monks frustrated the designs of God. The various steps by which the change was effected in the convent are not marked in the scanty annals of the time. The brethren appear at first in the story as saints in perfection, and a little further on are represented as degenerate. The change, however, took place on an increase of numbers and of wealth in the community; it does not, therefore, at all follow that the original monks degenerated; it was rather the second generation who broke in upon the strictness of the first. Again, it must be remembered, that strong expressions may be used, and rightly, about the corruption of monks, without implying the existence of gross impurity. A convent may degenerate into a lax and formal way of performing its duties, or it may be ruined by internal dissensions, without falling into vicious

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excesses. The most common commencement of corruption was a violation of the rule of poverty, and this seems to have been the case at Molesme. The wealth which had accrued to them from the bounty of the faithful had done away with the necessity of manual labour, and they refused to obey their abbot, who wished to keep it up as a portion of the discipline enjoined by the rule. Again, they insisted on keeping possession of parochial tithes, and they assumed habits of a richer and warmer sort than the rule allowed. They grounded their arguments on the general practice of monasteries about them, though it was opposed to the rule which they professed to follow. From the general state of monasticism at the period it was quite evident that these dispensations, though sanctioned by precedent, and in themselves not incompatible with strictness of life, led in most cases in the end to laxity. On these grounds St. Robert opposed these innovations, and his opposition led to further resistance from the monks; they had first begun by despising the poverty of Christ, and they ended by disobeying their abbot. Poverty and obedience are the very soul of monasticism, and a convent which has once transgressed these two portions of the vow is in a state next to hopeless. St. Robert saw that his presence only irritated his refractory children, and he determined on leaving them, as St. Benedict and other saints had set him the example of doing, and retired to a place called Aurum, the habitation of certain hermits.[1]

[1] Mabillon, Ann. Ben. 69, 73, identifies this with a place called Haur, where three hermits are said to have lived, and which was, in his time, a farm belonging to the monastery of Molesme.

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This was a severe trial to Stephen. He had come to Molesme because there he could serve Christ better than anywhere else, and he had for a time rejoiced in being able to follow the steps of his Divine Master. But he had gradually seen his brethren become worse and worse, till at last through their misconduct he was now abandoned by his spiritual guide. It is true he did not himself follow the laxity which he saw around him, but this, though it might set his own conscience at rest, could not restore the peace of the brotherhood. The very object of the cœnobitic life is that all should obey the same rule and do the same things, so that the zeal of one may kindle the other. The bond of charity was now broken, and the convent was in effect ruined. To add to his trial, he now found that a great portion of the charge of this unruly community was on his hands, for Alberic, who as prior naturally took the government of the abbey in the absence of the abbot, invested him with a portion of his authority. He therefore set about his hopeless task, but how far he succeeded we may guess from the treatment which the monks inflicted on his colleague. They seized on Alberic, who still endeavoured to carry out Robert's principles, beat him severely, and thrust him into a dungeon. On his release Alberic determined to quit the monastery, and he was followed by Stephen and one or two other monks. Thus was Stephen cast upon the world, deprived of all the guides which Providence had put into his way; so true is it that we must not set our hearts in this world even on the good which God allows us to work.

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Good is to be loved, not because it is ours, but because it is to God's glory; when He wills that it should perish we must not murmur, but keep our hearts still fixed upon Him, ready to do His will.

Stephen was now, it may be said, his own master. The authorities of his convent, by abandoning it, had released him from his vow of obedience. He, however, did not choose for himself an easy lot; he again sought the desert, and retired with Alberic and the other monks to a solitary place called Vivicus, now Vivier, near Landreville, about four leagues from Molesme.[1] God, however, did not leave His servant in this solitude. After he had been there for some time, gathering strength by prayer and fasting for the work which he was soon called upon to perform, it pleased Him to call him back from his retreat to his old monastery. The monks soon discovered that the flower of the community was gone, and that they could not govern themselves without Robert. It is probable that they were not thoroughly bad; they did not wish to give up the strict abstinence enjoined by the rule; it was rather the poverty which scandalised them; they did not like the coarse habit and the hard manual labour, and wished to be like their neighbours. They therefore began to long for Robert's return, and knew not how to win him back from his retreat after once driving him away by their misconduct, and then grossly ill-treating their prior in his absence. They at last determined to apply to the holy see, and succeeded in obtaining

[1] Mabillon, Ann. Ben. 66, 100.

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an order commanding Robert to resume the command of the monastery. The holy see appears to have been the great court of appeal of Christendom: monks good and bad, bearded hermits, and mitred abbots, all brought their causes to Rome; and if he could not afford to travel in any other way, the poor brother trudged manfully across the Alps with his wallet on his back to obtain justice from the papal court. The jurisdiction of bishops over abbots was ill defined, as may be seen by the independent way in which superiors left their monasteries without apparently consulting their bishop. None, therefore, but a power which held its seat at a distance from the scene of action, and could not be accused of selfish views, was able to step in when ordinary authority failed. A mandate from Rome Robert could not refuse to obey, and he again put himself at the head of the refractory monks. Stephen and Alberic, with the other monks who had retired to Vivier, followed the example of their abbot, and the whole brotherhood was again united within the cloister of Molesme. The monks who had before rebelled had either grown wiser or been frightened into submission, and were ready to obey their abbot; on the other hand, Robert had learned to deal more gently with them, now that they were disposed to be submissive. The command of the Pope had rendered it impossible to quit them a second time, without permission from Rome itself, or from a legate; so that it was clearly his duty to manage their unruly spirits as best he could, and by concession in some particulars to win them to keep the more essential portions of the

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rule. The monastery began again to flourish, and new convents were even placed under the jurisdiction of the abbot, and filled by monks of his choosing, who were to model the new community according to the reform introduced by him.

Though, however, the harmony of the convent was thus restored, and external decency preserved, yet it was far from being a place where those who aspired after perfection could rest in peace; the charm of holy poverty was gone, and many of the brethren of Molesme in secret regretted the changes which had taken place. The convent had ceased to be to them what it had been before; the alms of the faithful had enriched it, and they regretted the wooden huts and oratory, and the poverty which had obliged them to work in the heat and in the cold, as is the appointed lot of poor men. The foremost of their party was Stephen. Every morning the rule of St. Benedict was read in chapter, and he mourned in secret over the many departures from its holy dictates, of which the convent was guilty. To the generality of the world many of the commandments of Christ are precepts of perfection; but to monks who have sworn to quit the world, they are precepts of obligation. In token of this, a monk in some convents was buried in his habit, with the rule of St. Benedict in his hand, to show that by that rule he was to stand or fall at the last day. For a long time, however, Stephen and his companions made no formal complaint, but bore their sorrows in silence. Much might be said against taking any steps to remedy the state of things which they saw around them. It was not

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by their fault that they transgressed their rule; besides this, peace had but lately been restored to the monastery, and it was an invidious thing again to disturb the conscience of their brethren, which had so lately been set at rest. Again, each of them might think that the feelings which actuated him were merely the effect of his own restlessness, in which case it would be a far greater merit to obey in silence, than to afflict their bodies with fasting, and to walk about in coarse garments.

Gradually, however, by comparing his views with those of his neighbour, each man found that he was not singular in thus feeling acutely the misery of their situation. Stephen is said to have been the first to break the subject to Alberic;[1] his abhorrence of the dispensations and indulgences which the other monks claimed, may appear to be merely the restless feelings of one accustomed to live in the wild solitudes of nature, but they derive a meaning from the state of monasticism in his time. St. Benedict had in his rule left a power with the superior of altering or tempering the rule, according to the circumstances of the convent. The natural course of things had led abbots to take advantage of this provision, and their alterations had in time considerably changed the monastic state. It does not at all follow that any one was to blame in this. An abbot was at first the superior of a few poor brethren, who worked for their own

[1] Cum verbum innovandæ religionis in eadem domo motum fuisset, ipse Stephanus primus inter primos ferventissimo studio laboravit ac modis omnibus institit ut locus et ordo Cisterciensis institueretur.—*Exord. Mag.*

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livelihood amongst the rocks of some wilderness, or in some hidden valley, and who only differed from common labourers in their singing psalms day and night, in their fasting every day, and praying every hour; but the case was widely different when the same abbot was ruler over two or three hundred monks, and when the bounty of the faithful had made him the steward of the poor, by giving him wide lands and fair manors. The abbot became a temporal lord, with vassals under his command; he had, moreover, to sit in councils, ecclesiastical and civil, besides going to Rome on the business of the abbey, and making a progress to visit his estates. Again, my lord abbot, leading a solemn service with music and chanting under the canopy of his carved stall, or blessing the people from the altar with a jewelled mitre on his head, and a ring on his finger, was a very different person from the poor lord of a few acres in a desert, ruling over a few monks with a wooden staff like a shepherd's crook. Another change in monasteries was their application to learned purposes; St. Benedict's rule implies that many of the monks did not know how to read, and learnt the Psalter and divine office by heart;[1] but monasteries, naturally, became the chief seats of learning, and often contained two schools, one within the cloister for the novices, the other without it, for secular pupils. This involved a library and an establishment for copying manuscripts, so that manual labour might, in process of time, with pro-

[1] Reg. St. Ben. c. viii. 57, 58, with Calmet's Comment.

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priety give place to literary labours. None of these changes involved a violation of the rule; the abbot often wore a hair shirt under his splendid vestments, and slept upon a hard mattress of straw, stretched by the side of the magnificent state bed in his chamber. He was often really poor amidst the great wealth of the abbey, because the whole of the revenues which could be spared from the convent were given to the poor. In this way Cluny, in St. Hugh's time, seems to have been a wonderful and stately seminary, from which proceeded the great men of the age, rulers of churches, and even of the world, through their sanctity of life. Still with its magnificent church, and great revenues, it was not what it was before, the poor and simple religious house. It would be absurd to depreciate it on this account; as well might one precious stone be blamed for not being another; still it was a fact that it was changed; there were dispensations from manual labour, and pittances in the refectory, and a stud of horses for the abbot and for the prior, even for each dean to ride away when he would, to visit his charge. Innocent as all this was, when such an abbot as St. Hugh governed Cluny, still it was a dangerous state; a dispensing power is necessarily beside the law; its limits are undefined, for it quits the broad line of fact and precedent, and introduces moral questions, in which it is always difficult to determine the precise point where good begins to mix with evil. Thus the very next abbot to St. Hugh ruined Cluny for a time, and in Stephen's time very many monasteries were in a miserable state, on account of the

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laxity introduced by abbots under the name of dispensations. Stephen lived during the whole of the long struggle between the popes and the secular power, and we shall see proofs in the subsequent actions of his life, that in the state of perplexity and confusion which ensued during that most momentous contest, pomp and luxury had power to invade even the cloister. Many were the innovations introduced under the name of dispensations, till hardly a vestige of the monastic character remained. Simony again brought with it intercourse with princes, pride and luxury. We must not, therefore, wonder at Stephen's hatred of the very name of dispensation.

Furthermore, we must recollect that Stephen had been a dweller in the wilderness and forest; he aspired to the highest Christian perfection, so that he would not have been contented even with Cluny. Though a man of learning, he wished to become foolish for Christ's sake; he wished to be perfectly destitute, and to depend for his daily bread and his coarse habit on God's providence. No record remains of any action or saying of his against the stately order of Cluny, but his vocation lay another way. God had kindled a divine love in his heart, and it was fire in his bones, and would not let him rest till he had accomplished the work which he was sent on earth to perform. God's saints are His workmanship, and the same Almighty goodness which has made the lilies, and also given its own beauty to the rose, which has created flowers, precious stones, and animals, each with a different glory, has also in the creation of His grace variously

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moulded the souls of His saints. Stephen's lot was to be of those who, by their utter destitution of human helps, most of all illustrate the new order of things, which our blessed Lady celebrated in the Magnificat. Out of weakness he was to be made strong; with his perfect poverty, his coarse and tattered garment, his body bowed down by labour and mortification, he was to bring in an order of men into the Church, who beat down pomp and luxury, intellect and power. His wooden staff was more powerful than the sceptre of kings, and his fragile frame was the centre, around which the whole of the saintly prelates of the Church, who fought against luxury and simony in the Church, clustered and arranged their battle; the pre-eminence which God gave to His saint in after-life is a full vindication of his conduct in these his first years, when he was a poor despised monk, treated by his brethren as an enthusiast and fanatic.

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CHAPTER IV

REMOVAL FROM MOLESME

THE scanty chronicles of the time give but few particulars of the history of Molesme at this period; all that is known is, that the war of dispensations continued for some time at Molesme, and that the greater part of the brethren continued to scoff at Stephen's scruples. His energetic words had, however, made a great impression on many of the community, so that the number of those who longed for a more perfect way began to form by no means a despicable part of the monastery. Seeing then that God had touched the hearts of so many of his brethren, Stephen determined on attempting a plan, out of which afterwards sprung the order of Citeaux. He conceived the idea of a new monastery, to be governed according to the very letter of the rule of St. Benedict. The scheme was in many respects a very bold one: in the first place, it involved leaving Molesme, and retiring again to the desert or the forest; it was in fact beginning the world afresh, and exposing himself naked and destitute to all the hardships which beset an infant community. These, however, were difficulties which he had already overcome, and which his faith would teach him to treat as light afflictions.

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But there was another point of view in which he was running a risk in his new undertaking. We are far too apt to look upon the Middle Ages as times to which ordinary rules of prudence will not apply. It is quite true that now, when all is over, we can look back and wonder at the superhuman deeds which faith then achieved; but we forget that we now consider them as they are lit up by the glory which a successful result has thrown upon them. Many a man whom we now revere as a saint, was looked upon in his day as a fanatic. Stephen had then to consider the chances of success, just as we should do now; he must have bethought himself whether his scheme was likely to *answer*, in modern phraseology. The difference between him and one of us is simply that he had the faith to throw himself on a great principle, in spite of the chances of its not answering. There was a great chance that the opinion of even good men would condemn him; he was leading a number of monks into the desert, and that from Molesme, a regular, and, in many respects, a flourishing community. In returning to the letter of the rule of St. Benedict, he was going back from the twelfth century to the sixth, a leap almost as wide as it would be in the nineteenth to go back to the twelfth. He was, moreover, passing over the great precedent of Cluny, then, as has been before intimated, in the height of its splendour. On the other hand, the voice of his conscience was loud within him, bidding him embrace the most perfect way: and the sad state of a great many monasteries, which had fallen into disorder from the use of dispensations, was an

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external voice, hardly less loud, warning him to avoid the rock on which they had split. His first care was to ascertain the will of his superiors; he therefore and his companions applied to Robert and stated their difficulties. Their faith in thus throwing themselves on the will of their abbot was rewarded, for he cordially entered into their schemes. With a joyful heart, they then consulted with their abbot on the best mode of effecting what they wished, feeling now sure that God was with them in the course which they intended to pursue.

They were obliged to proceed warily, for the monks of Molesme, however unwilling themselves to follow the rule of St. Benedict in all its strictness, were still too well aware of the lustre which Robert, Alberic, and Stephen cast upon the convent, to bear to part with them easily. They did not therefore even apply to their own bishop of Langres, but went straight to Hugh, archbishop of Lyons and legate of the Holy See in France. It was early in the year 1098 that Abbot Robert set out from Molesme on his way to Lyons, accompanied by Stephen, and five other monks, Alberic, Odo, John, Lætaldus, and Peter. The prelate to whom they applied was one of the most distinguished adherents of St. Gregory VII., and had even expectations of succeeding to the popedom on his death. He was a great friend of St. Anselm, and at the time that our abbot came to Lyons with his companions, the illustrious exile had sought and obtained shelter there. Hugh was therefore a man to appreciate their difficulties. He entered into their scheme, and on their return to Molesme, sent

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them a letter authorising them to quit Molesme; this document, as it distinctly states the object for which they wished to leave their monastery, shall be here subjoined at length.

"Hugo, Bishop of Lyons and legate of the Apostolic See, to Robert, Abbot of Molesme, and to the brethren with him, who desire to serve God according to the rule of St. Benedict. Be it known to all who rejoice in the advance of our Holy Mother the Church, that you, with certain men, your sons, brethren of the convent of Molesme, have stood in our presence at Lyons, and declared that ye wished to adhere to the rule of the blessed Benedict, which ye had up to this time kept in the said monastery in a lukewarm and negligent way, henceforth more strictly and more perfectly. Which thing, because it is evident that from many preventing causes ye cannot fulfil in the aforesaid place, we, consulting the salvation of both parties, that is, both of those who go away and those who stay, have thought it best that ye should retire to some other place, which the bounty of God shall point out to you, and there serve the Lord to your souls' greater health and quiet. To you therefore who were then present, Abbot Robert, and brethren Alberic, Odo, John, Stephen, Lætaldus, and Peter, yea and to all whom according to rule and by common counsel ye have determined to unite to yourselves, we both then gave advice to keep this holy design, and therein now bid you persevere, and through apostolic authority and by the setting of our seal confirm it for ever."

On receiving this letter, Robert solemnly gave

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back into the hands of the brethren who remained the vows which they had taken of obedience to himself, at the same time giving them liberty to elect a successor. Twenty-one brethren, gathered together by Stephen's energetic words, determined to take advantage of the archbishop's permission and to follow him into the desert; the others had not the courage to take this bold step. A convent is a little world in itself, and has its mixed characters and tempers, just like the world; the mass of the community in such a convent as Molesme probably consisted of men who followed the leading of others, and contented themselves with arriving at a certain standard of holiness, without rising much above or falling much below it. Let no one suppose that all is smooth in a convent life; it has temptations of its own, temptations to rising only just in time for matins, to a love of such ease as the cloister will allow, to talking vain words at recreation time, to a low standard of devotion; temptations at which those who live in the world, exposed to imminent danger of mortal sin, may smile; and yet real, because they argue habitual sloth. Those then who were contented with this low state of religion, and yet were incapable of open acts of disobedience and breaches of conventual discipline, would be able to appreciate the high character of Robert and Stephen, though they could not follow them. Such men would be painfully startled at finding that they must lose brethren beside whom they had knelt at vigils, and to whose fervour in singing God's praises they had been accustomed to look as a flame whereat to kindle their own cold-

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ness. The disobedient and rebellious, on the other hand, who considered the fervour of the saints to be a reproach on their own evil tempers, were glad to be left to themselves without the restraint which the presence of the strict party imposed upon them. It was therefore with various emotions that the monks of Molesme saw their brethren set out on their expedition. As for the little band itself who thus left their convent for the wilderness, nothing could be more dreary than the prospect before them. They were in every respect adventurers, and none ever set out in quest of adventures across sea or land in a more destitute condition than did these twenty-one brethren. Robert took with him the ecclesiastical vestments and vessels necessary for celebrating the holy mysteries, and also a large breviary for the ordering of the divine office. Except this, they had nothing. Two accounts are left us of their march; one that they left the convent gates, not knowing whither they were going, and that they sought the wildest and most rugged paths, and at last arrived at Citeaux, where a voice from heaven bade them rest. Another account says that they had already pitched upon Citeaux, before they left Molesme, as being the most lonely and uncultivated spot that they could find. Either story gives a sufficiently dreary account of their march, for a journey, undertaken with the prospect of arriving at such a place as Citeaux is then described to have been, is no less appalling than one of which the end was altogether unknown. But however naked they appeared to the eye of the world, the heavenly enthusiasm

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which prompted them to enter on such a course was enough to buoy them up under their difficulties. At all events, even this nakedness was more welcome to Stephen, and such as he, than the miserable uncertainty which had hung over him ever since the degeneracy of Molesme. His conscience had been hurt by his inability to keep the rule according to which he had sworn to live; and no suffering can be so dreadful as a state of doubt, whether we are in the place in which God would have us be. Stephen was now sure that he was right; God had blessed his endeavours after a more perfect way, by turning the heart of his abbot, and of the legate of the Holy See; and now his path was clear before him. He had entered in at the strait gate, and now had only to pursue the way into which God had directed his feet. There are moments when holy men feel that their crown is won; such must have been Stephen's thought as he left the gates of Molesme. His Saviour had with His own hand put the cross upon his shoulders, and he had now, with the same Saviour's help, only to carry it with a stout heart to his grave.

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CHAPTER V

ARRIVAL AT CITEAUX

TRAVELLERS are often struck with the picturesque situations of ancient abbeys. The fact is, that those parts which are now the most beautiful, were in former times the wildest and most solitary. Little nooks, which are even now so lonely that the relentless hand of civilisation has left them in their primitive beauty, must have been mere wildernesses, far from human habitation, in ages when so much of the earth was uncultivated. Besides which, rocks and mountains may be very picturesque to look at, and yet very uncomfortable as dwelling-places; and many a stream, the banks of which are now visited for the sake of a beautiful ruin, at the time when the monastery was built flowed through pathless wilds and uninhabited forests. So it was with Citeaux; at the time when Stephen and his companions first came to dwell there, it was a very different place from what it was when the stately abbey was built, which contained the tombs of all the dukes of Burgundy. Citeaux was the name of a spot situated in the midst of a wild wood, in the diocese of Châlons and the province of Burgundy. It was only tenanted by wild beasts, who found shelter in the thickets with which the

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place was overgrown, and into which no one ever cared to penetrate. A small stream ran through it which took its rise from a fountain, about a league from Dijon, called Sans-fonds, because it was so deep that no one had ever found the bottom. This stream had also a strange peculiarity connected with it, that in the time of rain it was languid and shallow, but when the heat had dried up all other rivers, it ran merrily along in a copious stream, as if it defied the power of the sun. The industry of the monks in after ages collected its waters into three noble ponds, filled with fish; but at the time of which we write, it was ever overflowing its banks, so that the place is said to have derived its name from an old word expressive of the flags and bulrushes which the marshy soil produced in abundance. On the borders of the wood were several scattered cottages, where dwelt the peasants who cultivated the estate of the Viscount of Beaune, to whom the place belonged; and there was also a rude and small church, for the use of this rustic population. The lord of Beaune gave them leave to take possession of this most unpromising tenement, and they forthwith began to clear away the briers and the sedge, and to cut down the trees, so as to leave an open space for their habitation. They then rudely put togther the trunks of the trees which they had felled, and constructed the monastery, such as it was. The rudeness of their dwelling, however, raised for them a most unexpected friend. Odo, the then Duke of Burgundy, had been originally one of the wildest of the iron nobles who infested the land. A few months, how-

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ever, before their arrival at Citeaux, the majestic looks and bearing of our own Anselm had cowed the ducal robber, who had set out in full armour to seize upon what he conceived to be the rich coffers of Canterbury, as the saint passed through his dominions. The eye of the archbishop seems to have converted him, for from that moment he became an altered man. Hearing from the archbishop of Lyons that a number of holy men had come to build a monastery in his territory, he inquired about them. So miserable, however, was their dwelling-place, that fearing lest they should die from the roughnesses which they had to bear in this barren and dreary spot, he sent workmen to assist them in rearing their monastery. At length, all was ready for their reception, and they chose the 21st of March 1098, for the solemn inauguration of the new abbey. A double festivity in that year fell on that day; it was not only Palm Sunday, but also the feast of St. Benedict. They canonically elected Robert as their abbot, and he received the pastoral staff at the hands of Walter, bishop of Châlons, who thus regularly erected the monastery into an abbey, under the name of Novum Monasterium, or New Minster, in honour of St. Mary, to whom, from this first wooden edifice, all churches of the order were afterwards dedicated. The brethren then one by one vowed to pay him obedience, according to a form preserved in the Exordium Parvum. "That profession which I made in thy presence at the monastery of Molesme, that same profession and stability I confirm before God and His saints in thy hands, that I will keep it in

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this place called New Minster, in obedience to thee and to thy successors to be regularly substituted in thy room." Odo of Burgundy and Rainaldus of Beaune had before given them the allodium, or freehold estate on which the monastery was built; the serfs also who tilled the ground were given over to them, as well as the church in which they used to worship. It is characteristic of these first Cistercian fathers, that they refused to receive this church from the Viscount of Beaune, as an appendage to the estate, nor would they have anything to do with it, unless it were given up entirely into their hands, by his abandoning his rights in a separate act; for "the abbot and the rest of the brethren thought it by no means right to receive the church from his hands, because he was a layman."[1] This took place in the very heat of the contest about investitures, and thus at the very outset of their order, the Cistercians chose their side in the momentous contest, though they could as yet but show it in a

[1] Gall. Christ. tom. iv. Instr. p. 232. It is quite evident that this act of the Cistercians was meant for a protest against lay usurpation, but its precise bearing is not so easy to discover. It seems that the Church property had in some way become a portion of the allodium or freehold estate which had come to Rainaldus through his wife. This appears from the phrase *tenere ecclesiam*, which is of the same cast as *redimere*, *recipere ecclesiam*, where *ecclesia* means the property belonging to a church. What the Cistercians here did, *i.e.* receiving back ecclesiastical property from a layman (suscipere ecclesiam de manu laici), was afterwards forbidden by the third Lateran Council and the Council of London in 1200, unless the bishop consented to the arrangement. Though these canons were not passed at this time, our Cistercians felt the difficulty and refused to receive the church as a portion of the domain. They required Rainaldus to make a formal renunciation of the Church property by a separate act. V. Van Espen, Jus Eccl., pt. ii. sect. 4, tit. 2, c. 5.

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small way. A few days before that Palm Sunday, St. Anselm, whom they had left at Lyons, had set out on his way to Rome, and on that very Sunday, while Citeaux was being solemnly founded, the same saint had left his train at a small town on the road to Italy, and had gone with two monks to an unknown monastery, to celebrate the feast of St. Benedict. The simple brethren did not know who he was, and bade him beware in his journey, because the lord archbishop of Canterbury had, as was reported, been stopped on his way to Rome, by the perils of the road. Anselm and the monks of Citeaux were at the same moment, in different parts of the world, fighting the same cause, and yet neither party knew what the other was about; but true monks everywhere have a sort of instinct of what is the good and the right side; they have no earthly interests to dim their vision of what is God's cause, and we may trust a monk for being ever in his place—for the Church against the world.

The officers of the New Monastery, thus quietly established, were now appointed; Alberic returned to his old situation which he held at Molesme, that of prior; Stephen was made sub-prior. In this peaceable state everything remained for a year under Robert's guidance, but he was not destined to see the full fruit of his labours. The monks of Molesme again found that they could not do without him. It required a firm hand to rule those refractory spirits who had once broken loose, and could only be kept in order by an authority which they respected. The secession also of such men as Robert, Alberic, and Stephen, from the convent had

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brought it into disrepute, and this could only be done away by regaining their abbot. The authority of the archbishop of Lyons, however, who had countenanced Robert's departure for Citeaux, rendered it a difficult matter to win him back. The only authority to which they could appeal was Rome, and to Rome they went, nothing daunted by the length of the way. A council was celebrated at Rome in the third week after Easter, 1099; it was convened by Urban II., for the condemnation of investitures, and for devising means for carrying on the crusade. Thither the monks repaired, and represented to the pope the widowed state of the church of Molesme, deprived of its first abbot and pastor. Urban seems to have suspected them; he describes in his letter to Hugh, archbishop of Lyons, the great clamour with which they entered into the council, and seems rather to have yielded to their importunity, against his own judgment. He did not directly command Robert to return to Molesme, but he bade Hugh do his best to bring him back if it could be done; and at all events he ordered him to take care that the inhabitants of the wilderness of Citeaux (as he calls it) should be left in peace, and that the monks of Molesme be made to keep their rule. The legate held a consultation on the subject at a place near Lyons, called Pierre encise, and determined that the only way to restore peace, both to Molesme and to the new monastery, was to give up Robert to Molesme, and to forbid the two convents to have any further communication with each other, except such as St. Benedict enjoins on houses between which there is

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no connection but the common profession of religion. Gaufridus, the abbot who had been elected in the room of Robert, was willing to yield the government of the abbey, and nothing now remained but that Robert himself should quit Citeaux, and return to the post which he had so often quitted and resumed. He again gave up his own will to obey his superiors, and returned to the bishop of Châlons the pastoral staff, which he had a year and a few months before received from his hands. He then freed the monks of Citeaux from the obedience which they owed to him, and went back to his old charge at Molesme. He was indeed a perfect pattern of obedience, and suffered himself to be bandied about from one convent to another as the will of his superiors directed; notwithstanding his aspirations for a more perfect way, he abandoned them at the command of God, knowing that no sufferings are acceptable to God, if not undertaken according to His will in charity. Doubtless he merited more in God's sight by giving up his brethren at Citeaux for his refractory subjects at Molesme, than he could have done by the most austere life. His obedience was rewarded, for Molesme appears to have flourished under his rule, if we may judge from the fact that several monasteries were founded from it. One nunnery, that of Juilly, in which St. Bernard's sister afterwards took the vows, owed its origin to St. Robert. It is probable that he still assisted Stephen and Alberic with his counsel, but his direct connection with Citeaux ceased with his last departure from Molesme. He died about the year 1110, and was canonised by Pope Honorius III.

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CHAPTER VI

STEPHEN AS PRIOR

ROBERT left nothing behind him at Citeaux but the vestments and sacred vessels, which he had brought with him; these were expressly, according to the legate's command, to belong to the New Monastery. The large Breviary also was to remain there till St. John Baptist's day, by which time the brethren were to have copied out and then to send it to Molesme. This, and the remembrance which they kept of his virtues, was all the vestige which remained of his jurisdiction of Citeaux: he left them as free as if he had never been their abbot, or received their vows. They had therefore now to elect a successor, and their choice fell upon Alberic; under him Stephen was naturally made prior. These two had worked hand in hand from the first commencement of Molesme, and remained together even when Robert seceded from them; and now that he had finally left them, the eyes of the whole community were fixed upon them. Stephen had been in a manner the pupil of both, and it seemed as if the virtues of each were necessary to make up the defects of his original character. He had left Sherborne, as we have seen, from a violent thirst for knowledge, and had for some time roamed about the world almost

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without an object, certainly without a clear knowledge of his vocation. He had first learned obedience under Robert, and the stability of his character had been tried by the troubles which he had encountered at Molesme; and now he had a further lesson to learn from Alberic, that of patient prudence. "Alberic," says the Exordium, "when he had received, though much against his will, the pastoral charge, began to bethink himself, as being a man of wondrous prudence, what stormy troubles, coming to shake the house committed to him, might annoy it." And troubles enough there were about him. The post of abbot was at all times one which involved great anxiety, from the absolute powers which were vested in him. It was to him that the strict obedience which formed so large a part of the monastic rule was due, the deepest respect was paid to him, even to bowing the knee, and profound inclinations.[1] The officers of the monastery, from the prior downwards, were removable at his will.[2] At the same time he was to be in an especial way the chief spiritual guide of all the brethren, and to temper the rigour of the rule for the weak, without introducing irregularity into the convent. To him the monks revealed all their sorrows, and recurred for advice; for which there was a place called the auditorium especially set apart. Even here, however, they could not speak without his leave; on their appearance he gave them the benediction; but if after this he kept a stern silence, the

[1] Usus Cist. Notandum quia quando Monachi osculantur Abbatem, coram eo genua flectent et post osculum profunde inclinent. P. i. c. 90.
[2] Reg. St. Ben. 65.

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brother who applied for license left the auditorium without speaking.[1] At the same time, the regulation of the habits and of the food of the monks was in his hands, so that the temporal and spiritual prosperity of the convent depended in a great measure upon him alone. No stronger proof of the great power of the abbot need be sought, than the fact that most of the later monastic reformations attack at once the power of his office, some even making it triennial. They may have done away with some evils, but at the same time they changed the spirit of monasticism, for there can be no perfect obedience where all may be lords in turn. At least so the Cistercians thought, and in their reform (for so it was) the abbot had all the powers which St. Benedict vested in the office. Alberic therefore had full need of the "wondrous prudence" which the old Cistercian history celebrates. The abbot of Citeaux was not then the magnificent personage who celebrated mass pontifically with the episcopal mitre, ring, and sandals, the lord of five military orders, sitting in a lofty chair, on a level with the bishop, in the parliament of Burgundy.[2] Alberic was but the head of a few monks in a marshy desert, where they had to struggle to win a hard subsistence from the barren soil: they were exposed to the oppressions of any baron who might take a fancy to molest them; and, above all, they were treated as enthusiasts and fanatics by the

[1] Reg. Magist. c. 9.

[2] Innocent VIII. gave the abbot of Citeaux the privilege of celebrating pontifically, in a bull dated April 9, 1489; vide also Gall. Christ. 4, 983.

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monasteries around them. Their calumnies might at any time alienate the favour of the Duke of Burgundy, who as yet had protected them; for the saintly boldness with which they determined to keep the whole rule of St. Benedict had irritated not only their neighbours of Molesme, but even the German convents had had news of the fanaticism and disobedience of this New Monastery.

It was well for Stephen that he was brought close to Alberic, in these trying times of the Cistercian struggles for existence: his office of prior linked him to the abbot, and gave him an opportunity of watching the calm wisdom with which Alberic warded off these difficulties. The prior, according to St. Benedict's rule,[1] was to be entirely the abbot's minister; and the Cistercians kept up this first notion of a prior. "Let the prior, within and without, concerning all things and in all things, act according to the will of the abbot." They even gave less authority to the prior than was usual in other rules, as may be seen by comparing Lanfranc's decrees, c. 3, with the Usus Cisterciensis. The prior was thus the eye and the hand of the abbot; his office was to take the abbot's place in all the common routine of the convent when the abbot was engaged, and specially to keep up the regularity of the brethren, by giving the signal for labour and for the chapter. He also presided in the refectory, and gave the signal by a small bell, when they were to begin, and when to leave off eating; for the Cistercian abbot, as was prescribed

[1] Reg. St. Ben. c. 65. Usus Cist. p. i. 111.

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in St. Benedict's rule, always ate with the guests who happened to come to the abbey. Stephen's principal duty, therefore, was to work conjointly with Alberic, and he profited by the office which thus threw him in contact with that holy man.

Alberic's first care was to provide for the safety of his abbey, "that it might for ever remain in quiet, safe from the oppression of all persons, ecclesiastical or secular." It appears from the archbishop of Lyons' letter to Pope Pascal, that "the brethren of the Church of Molesme, and some other neighbouring monks, did not cease to harass and disquiet them, thinking that they themselves were looked upon as vile and despicable by the world, as long as these strange and novel monks were seen to dwell among them." They endeavoured to entice away stragglers from the Cistercian brethren back to Molesme, and even used violence and guile in order to disturb the quiet of the New Monastery. Alberic's only place of refuge was the Holy See; and at this moment two cardinals, John and Benedict, were in France, for the purpose of devising means to punish Philip, King of France, who had divorced his own wife Bertha, and was living in adultery with Bertrada, wife of Fulke, Count of Anjou. The two cardinals held a council at Poictiers, and excommunicated the king; but amidst the press of business which this involved, they found leisure to attend to the affairs of Citeaux. It appears that the fame of the saintly inhabitants of this poor monastery had spread all over France, and reached the ears of the legates. The words which the cardinals use in their letter to the Pope

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might almost seem to imply that they had been in person to Citeaux: at all events, they must have seen some of the brethren, whose appearance struck them with admiration, and they willingly wrote to the holy father, begging him to take the monastery under his special protection. Alberic assembled the chapter, and with the concurrence of Stephen and the rest of the brethren, two monks, John and Ilbodus, were despatched to Rome, with letters from the cardinal legates, from Hugh, archbishop of Lyons, and from the bishop of Châlons. Pascal had been but a year elected to the papal throne, and was then in the height of his power; his gracious demeanour and piety had conciliated all about him, and his unanimous election had brought to Rome a peace which it had not known for a long time. The moment therefore which the Cistercians chose was a fortunate one. They found that Pascal was absent from Rome, and they had to follow him as far as Troja in Apulia. The warm expressions of esteem which his letter to Alberic contains, prove that he received the brethren with open arms. Himself a monk of Cluny, and a disciple of St. Hugh, he could well enter into their troubles; and although he afterwards showed himself so very unable to comprehend the great cause for which his predecessors had fought, yet his character was such as to appreciate the motives which had driven the brethren of Citeaux into the wilderness. He immediately granted the request of the two envoys, and gave them a letter by which he took the New Monastery under the special protection of the Holy See. He calls them "his most dear

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sons in Christ, whom he longed after much," and he concludes with a sentence of excommunication against any "archbishop or bishop, emperor or king, count or viscount, judge, or any other person ecclesiastical or civil," who, being aware of the protection granted by the Holy See, should molest the abbey. The letter is dated April 18, 1100. The old Cistercian historian, after giving an account of the protection thus extended by the Holy See, adds with a sort of melancholy feeling, that it was granted and the messengers had returned "before Pope Pascal had been taken captive by the emperor and sinned." This privilege of protection thus obtained from the Holy See was of the utmost consequence to Citeaux. It is evidently not an exemption, that is, it is not meant to exempt the abbot from episcopal jurisdiction, and to subject him immediately to the Holy See, for the canonical obedience to the see of Châlons is expressly mentioned. Its import must be understood from similar documents granted by former sovereign pontiffs. The jurisdiction of monasteries was always a difficulty in the Church; it is generally believed that they were from the first subject to the bishop; so far is this from the case, that during the first 150 years of their existence, that is, till the council of Chalcedon, monks were no more under the bishop than other laymen. As monachism developed into a system, the bishops naturally became the ultimate authority to which convents were subject. Still it was necessary that the abbot should have an authority next to absolute in the internal management; and according to the rule of

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St. Benedict, he has the power to excommunicate the monks who transgressed the rule. The bishop only appears as the abbot's assistant in punishing the brethren who were priests.[1] Again, he blessed the abbot when he had been chosen by the convent, and it was from him that the abbot's authority was derived.[2] As time went on, bishops encroached upon the convents; they required money for the benediction of the abbot, interfered with the freedom of election, and took upon them the administration of the temporalities. The poor of Christ had no refuge but the Holy See;[3] and several letters of Pope Gregory the Great are extant, in which he commands bishops to respect the privileges of abbeys, and takes them under the special protection of the chair of St. Peter. In one case he even withdraws the sole jurisdiction over an abbey from the bishop of the diocese, and joins with him a council of six bishops. That great pontiff knew that a monastery should be perfect in itself; the very principle of obedience required it to be subject to one head, and the authority of the bishop was only necessary to constitute that head, that the obedience might be canonical, as also to superintend, not to interfere with, his authority. They were Christ's spiritual army, ready at any time to assert the faith against heresy, however powerful, and setting up the light of heavenly purity when the profligacy of the world had well nigh cast away religion. In order to do this, they must be a whole within themselves, and cut off

[1] c. 62. [2] c. 65.
[3] Ep. lib. ix. Inst. 2, 111, lib. xiii. Inst. 6, 8, 9.

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from worldly influence, and from interests without the cloister. A bishop in most cases could not be a monk, and therefore could not govern a convent; he could only come in at certain times as a remedy in cases beyond the rule. Subsequent pontiffs followed St. Gregory in jealously guarding the independence of monasteries; for instance, John IV.[1] even granted a formal exemption to two convents, and subjected them immediately to the Holy See. The primitive meaning of such extraordinary privileges was to guard against the encroachments of which bishops had been guilty, and to keep the internal government of the abbey in the hands of the abbot; they were not, however, intended to separate monks from the canonical obedience due to the bishop. It is true that after the time of which we are writing, they came to be much abused; and St. Bernard complains of the ambition of the abbots, who endeavoured to avoid the authority of their bishop, whilst he approves of the devotion of founders of monasteries, who placed their houses under the protection of Rome. Of this nature was the letter of Pascal to Alberic; it was not, as we have said, an exemption from episcopal authority, but it was a privilege, by which the defenceless house of Christ's poor ones was taken under the wings of the Apostolic See. Two things were especially commanded by the pope; one, "that it should be lawful for no person whatever to change the state of their mode of life." This left them full power to live as they pleased

[1] Mabillon, Ann. Ben. tom. i. Appendix, No. 17, 18.

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according to the strict rule of St. Benedict; a bishop might do his best to oblige them to keep their rule, if they broke it; but he could not compel them to observe the same customs as most other convents around them; to profess the rule of St. Benedict, but in effect to relax it under pretence of dispensations. Again, it left them free to establish what usages they pleased; every monastery had many traditionary practices and ceremonies peculiar to itself, in matters which the rule had left open; and Pascal by this provision exempted the Cistercians from the usages of any other religious house, and left them free to form their own customs. Out of this permission arose the Usus Cisterciensis. The other special provision made by the pope was, "that none should receive the monks of your monastery called the New Minster, without a commendation according to the rule." This was in fact a confirmation of the canonical authority committed by the bishop of Châlons to the abbot of Citeaux by the delivery of the pastoral staff; it was the act by which he had authority over the monks, so that they could not leave the cloister without his consent. Without vows, and those made to a person vested with authority, monks are a mere collection of individuals, dissolvable at will; the absence of a canonical vow changes the whole idea of monastic life, and none can hope for God's blessing on the most solemn engagements which they form, unless the power in whose hands they place themselves is the representative of the Church. Otherwise they can never be sure that their obedience is not self-will. These words of

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Pascal, therefore, are like the recognition of a corporate body by the law; one Christian may any day that he pleases make a vow that he will live in obedience to another; but unless that other is recognised by the Church, the ecclesiastical law cannot take cognisance of the transaction. Such is the explanation of this privilege given by the pope to Citeaux, which at once raised it above the calumnies of the monks who felt their own lives to be reproved by the holiness of their neighbours.

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CHAPTER VII

CISTERCIAN USAGES

ALBERIC, now that he had obtained the sanction of the Holy See, set forward with a bold heart in his strict following of St. Benedict's rule. In the execution of all the reforms which distinguished what afterwards became the order of Citeaux, Stephen as prior was necessarily foremost; the whole movement, indeed, was but carrying into effect what he had before conceived at Molesme. The first alteration effected was the cutting off of all superfluity in the monastic habit. The Church in the beginning of the twelfth century had a hard battle to fight with pomp and luxury within the sanctuary itself. Courtly prelates, such as Wolsey in a later age, were not uncommon, and this worldly spirit had invaded even the cloister. A reformation, therefore, such as that effected by Alberic and Stephen at the outset of the century, was of the utmost consequence in deciding the struggle in favour of Christian poverty. They were not as yet conscious of the importance of what they were doing; they were but a few poor monks, serving God in the midst of a marshy wild, in an obscure corner of Burgundy, and only aimed at securing their own salvation. But they arose in

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a critical time for Christendom, and just turned the scale as it was wavering. Let us hear the words of a good old monk, who wrote in another part of the world during the first years of Citeaux.[1] "How shall I begin to speak? For on all sides is the sacred end of monkish life transgressed, and hardly aught is left us, save that, as our holy father Benedict foretold, by our tonsure and habit we lie to God. We seem almost all of us prone to pride, to contention, scandal, detraction, lying, evil speaking, hurtful accusations, contumacy, wrath, bitterness, despising of others, murmuring, gluttony," and he winds up all by saying, "we are seduced by a love of costly apparel." Bitter are the complaints that we hear of one monk[2] clad in rich grey or party-coloured silks, and another ambling by on a mule which cost 200 solidi. What shall we say to the proud abbot with his train of sixty horse, riding forth, not like the father of a monastery, but like an armed castellan? Or to another with his robe of costly fur, and his sideboard of gold and silver plate, though he rode but four leagues from home.[3] And if the abbot himself was in sober black, his secular attendants rode behind him in gay clothing of scarlet or green, the motley procession arresting the eyes of beholders along the road, whilst it frightened the porter of the poor monastery where they were to put up for the night. It was high time for the Cistercian to step in with his rough woollen stuff, and to return to St. Benedict's rule. Alberic

[1] Chronicon Vulturnense, Muratori, Script. Rer. Ital. tom. i. p. 2. 343.

[2] St. Bernard, Apol. ad Guil. 10, 11. [3] Stat. Pet. Ven. 40. 70.

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and his brethren rejected all habits that were not mentioned in the rule;[1] they therefore would not wear garments with ample folds, nor garments of fur, shirts, nor hoods separated from the rest of the habit. St. Benedict allows the habit to vary according to the climate; but for countries of a mean temperature, he gives it as his opinion that a garment called cuculla, a tunic, and a scapular are sufficient. At first these were only the common habits worn by the peasants of the country. The stern old Benedictine looked for nothing picturesque; he had made himself poor for his Lord's sake, and he wore the dress of the poor among whom he lived, and with whom he worked in the cold and heat, in the rain and in the sunshine. Ancient pictures are still seen of the monk in his tunic and scanty scapular, reaching down to his knees, without sleeves, but with holes through which his arms were passed, and with a pointed cowl enveloping his head. Over this, which was his working dress, he wore in the choir and in the house the cuculla, which was a large mantle, not unlike a close cope, without sleeves, and enveloping the whole person.[2] There was many a step between this coarse garb and the ample folds into which it had developed around the noble figure of

[1] "Rejicientes a se quicquid regula refragabatur, froccos videlicet, et pellicias, staminias et caputia."—Exord. Parv. 15. Staminia is described by William of Malmesbury as "illud quod subtiliter texitur laneum, quod nos staminium vocamus."—Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. iv. § 336.

[2] See the cuculla of St. Remaclus, the oldest Benedictine habit existing in Martenne's time.—Voyage Lit. ii. 154.

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St. Hugh of Cluny.[1] In the Cluniac order the scapular was called cuculla, and the upper garment was called froccus. Instead of the pointed and almost conical cowl of the primitive Benedictine, their scapular had a fair and ample cowl, and the froccus had long and pendent sleeves two feet in circumference; again, their scapular covered not only the shoulders, but it was also expanded into a covering for the arms, so that it scandalised our simple Cistercians.[2] The froccus which Alberic and Stephen rejected was in fact the same garment as their own cuculla, as worn "with a difference" by the Cluniacs. They reverted as far as they could to St. Benedict's pattern, following the Italian rather than the French monks, for their scapular had the same form as that of Mount Cassino. With all their severity, there is a grace about the Cistercian habit, from the fond associations with which they connected it. In the black scapular worn over the white tunic, broad about the shoulders, then falling in a narrow strip to the feet, they saw the form of our Lord's cross, and thus they loved to bear it about with them even in sleep.[3] Their cuculla was compared by Pope

[1] Martenne, Voyage Lit. i. 229.

[2] That the froccus of the Cluniacs had sleeves is plain from the answer made by the Cluniac.—Martenne, Thes. Anec. tom. v. p. 1649, 47. Their amplum caputium is mentioned in St. Bernard's letter to Robert, his cousin. For the scapular, see Martenne, ibid. p. 1639, 25. The difference between the Cluniac froccus and Cistercian cuculla is said by Peter the Venerable, Ep. 27, to consist in that the latter was "album et curtum." Again, the cowl was detached from the froccus, as appears from Bernard, Abbot of Cassino, quoted by Mabillon, Acta Sanct. Ord. Ben. Sæc. v. Preface, p. 44.

[3] Martenne, ibid. 1650, 48.

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Boniface VI. to the six wings of the seraphim, for "it veils the head of the monk as it were with two wings, and the arms as it were with twain, and the body as it were with twain."[1] Another characteristic of the Cistercian habit was its white colour. The scapular, as we have said, was black, and when on a journey they might ride booted and spurred, with a grey cuculla, so that they were called in Germany grey monks; but their proper habit was white, and much wonder it excited amongst the brethren of other orders. The black monks meeting a white monk on a journey would stop and stare and point at the stranger as if he were a traveller in a foreign dress.[2] They reproached the Cistercians with wearing a garment fit only for a time of joy, whilst the monastic state was one of penitence.[3] But the white monks answered that the life of a monk was not only one of penitence, but was like that of the angels, and therefore they wore white garments, to show the spiritual joy of their hearts. And notwithstanding their coarse bread and hard beds, there was a cheerfulness about the Cistercians which may in a great measure be traced to what we should now call a sympathy with nature. Their life lay out of doors, amongst vineyards and corn-fields; their monasteries, as their names testify, were mostly situated in sequestered valleys, and were, by a law of the order, as old as the time of Alberic, never in towns, but in the country. From their constant meditation as they worked, they acquired a habit

[1] Ibid. 1649, 46. [2] Pet. Ven. Ep. iv. 17.
[3] Martenne, Thes. Anec. tom. v. 1649, 46.

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of joining their recollections of Scripture to natural objects; hence also the love for the Song of Solomon, which is evident in the earlier ascetic writers of the order. We shall see, in the course of this narrative, abundant proof that Stephen's white habit did not hide a gloomy or unfeeling heart.

The reason assigned for the change of colour in the habit is the devotion to St. Mary, observable in the order from the beginning. It was a standing law that all Cistercian monasteries should be "founded and dedicated to the memory of the queen of heaven and earth, holy Mary";[1] the hours of the Blessed Virgin were also recited very early after the foundation of Citeaux; and the angelic salutation[2] was one of the common acts of devotion put into the mouth of even the lay-brethren of the order. The immediate cause of the adoption of the white habit is mysterious; it seems difficult to account how it should all at once appear, without the sanction of any statute of the order, especially as it was opposed to the custom if not to the rule of the primitive Benedictines. A tradition is even current in the order, that Alberic saw the blessed Virgin in a vision putting upon his shoulders the white garment; and that he changed the tawny colour of St. Mary Magdalene to the joyful colour sacred to the mother of our Lord, in consequence of the consolation which the vision afforded him in the difficulties with which he was then struggling. The

[1] Nom. Cist. Inst. Cap. Gen., p. i. c. 18.

[2] The latter part of the Ave Maria was not added till the sixteenth century. Vide Mabillon, Acta Sanc. Præf., vol. v.

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vision has not much historical authority, though the tradition of the order, and the strange circumstance of the change of colour itself, are in favour of its truth. The one thing certain is, that it was assumed in honour of the spotless purity of St. Mary, the special patroness of the Cistercians; and the circumstance that she was chosen to be the peculiar saint of the rising order is in itself characteristic. One would have thought that the austerity of Alberic and Stephen would have led them to choose some martyr or some unbending confessor of the faith; but they rather raised their minds to her on whom the mind cannot rest without joy, though her own most blessed soul was pierced through with a sword. She was the spotless lily of the valleys in which the King of Heaven deigned to take up his abode; and the Cistercians thought it well that she should protect by her prayers their lowly houses, which were hid from the world in secluded vales, and make them also the dwelling-place of her Son.

It was not, however, only in their habit that the Cistercians imitated the primitive monks; they returned also to the scanty diet which St. Benedict prescribes. It was most of all in this particular that the abuse of dispensations crept in, for in this portion of the rule the abbot was especially to exercise his discretion.[1] A few years after the time when the Cistercian reform was effected the Cluniacs degenerated, after St. Hugh's death, under Abbot Pontius; not only did they eat meat every day in the week except Friday,[2] but they ransacked earth and air for highly-flavoured dainties. They

[1] Reg. St. Ben. 41. [2] Pet. Ven. Ep. vi. 15.

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kept huntsmen, who searched the forest through for venison and wild boars; their falconers brought them the choicest birds—pheasants, partridges, and wood-pigeons. The province under the archbishopric of Lyons seems at that time to have been especially full of monasteries from which religion had disappeared, inhabited by monks "whose cloister was the whole world, whose god was their belly."[1] Wine, well spiced, and mixed with honey, and meats highly seasoned with pepper, ginger, and cinnamon, were then to be found in the refectory of Cluny,[2] with all kinds of costly spices brought from beyond the sea and even from the East. Monks used also to retire to the infirmary under pretence of sickness, in order to eat meat; and strong healthy brethren might be seen walking about with the support of a staff, which was the mark of the infirm. The liberality of the faithful had also augmented the evil, as might be seen from the necrologies of monasteries, in which certain benefactors were commemorated who left sums of money to be laid out in pittances or relaxations for the monks on certain days beyond the rule. St. Benedict gives his monks a pound of bread a day besides two cooked dishes, and on days when they had more than one meal, a few raw vegetables or fruits for supper. As far as the letter of the rule went, these dishes might be fish, eggs, milk, cream, cheese, roots, and vegetables of all sorts;[3] even fowls were not excluded, but the custom of the primitive monks of the order had

[1] Pet. Ven. Ep. ii. 2. [2] St. Bern. Ep. i. 1, Stat. Pet. Ven. 11.
[3] Calmet, Com. Lit. ii. 32.

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banished all but the plainest vegetables boiled with salt. Cluny, even in its best times, had added to these frugal rules, and it is probably against the Cluniac innovations that Alberic and Stephen's regulations were framed. The Cluniacs divided their messes into two sorts, one called *generale*, which was allowed by the rule; another was *pitantia*, and beyond it. The regular cooks had nothing to do with the pittance, which was always distributed by the cellarer, the theory being that it was benevolently allowed beside the rule; again, it was never blessed. The general was given separately to each monk; the pittance was in one dish between two brethren. The common food of the brethren was beans and other vegetables. Minute directions are given "that the beans be stirred from the bottom with a spoon," lest they be scorched. Also they are to be boiled with grease, and one of the cooks, it is especially provided, may taste "the water of the beans, that he may prove if they be well seasoned." On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday the general consisted of beans and vegetables, besides which there was a pittance, which might be four eggs, or cheese. On other days the general, besides the vegetables, might be fish or five eggs. No one can accuse this diet of excess, and yet it was beyond the rule of St. Benedict. There is even a story to the effect that St. Peter Damian was shocked at the style of the refectory at Cluny, and especially at their using grease with their vegetables, and that he expressed his dissatisfaction to St. Hugh.[1] It is also quite true that amidst the

[1] Bibl. Clun. 461.

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marshy soil and damp woods of Citeaux, and with much more manual labour than was practised by the Cluniacs, Alberic and Stephen succeeded in establishing a much more strict system than that of Cluny. They rejected, says the Exordium, "dishes of divers kinds of food in the refectory, grease also, and whatsoever was opposed to the purity of the rule." It is known that they did not eat fish; even eggs seem to have been excluded, and milk was used only at the season of harvest, and that not as a pittance, but as one of the two dishes allowed by the rule.[1] After half a night spent in singing the divine office, in reading and meditation, and a day spent in agricultural labour, they assembled to what was during a great part of the year their single meal, which consisted solely of what St. Benedict allowed, and that procured by the sweat of their brow. Their fare was the convent bread and two messes of vegetables, boiled, not with the culinary accuracy of Cluny, but in the plainest way. It is instructive to observe the contrast between St. Hugh and Stephen. The abbot of Cluny himself lived a most austere life, but he was also a builder of magnificent churches, and of ecclesiastical ornaments.[2] He also gave dispensations to weaker brethren, in one case allowing a nobleman, whose dainty flesh had worn from his birth soft silks and foreign furs, to wear for a time a less rough habit than the rest of the brethren; in

[1] Vid. Us. Cist. 84 for the exclusion of fish and eggs; vid. Inst. Cap. Gen. 49, ap. Nomasticon Cisterciense, et Fastredi, Ep. ap. Op. St. Bern. ed. Ben.

[2] Vit. S. Hug. ap. Bib. Clun. p. 420.

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another, increasing the daily portion of the younger monks beyond what the rule prescribed.[1] Stephen, on the other hand, was cast in another mould; he was made, not to bring on the weak, but to lead the strong. All that belonged to earth he looked upon as an encumbrance, even though it was hallowed by consecration on the altar. He loved coarse and scanty food because it was a partaking of Christ's sufferings, and he clung to the rough monastic garment because it was an imitation of Christ's poverty. It was this love of poverty which also induced them to make another regulation, widely differing from the general practice of the monasteries at that time. "And because," it is said, "neither in the rule nor in the life of St. Benedict did they read that that doctor of the Church possessed churches, or altars, or oblations, or burial-grounds, or tithes belonging to other men, or bakehouses, or mills, or farms, or serfs, therefore they rejected all these things." They did not by any means intend to do away with the lands or offices of the convent; on the contrary, they had already accepted a grant of land, with the serfs and all that was upon it, from the Viscount of Beaune, and we may be sure that both mills and bakehouses were already in full operation at Citeaux, for St. Benedict's rule prescribes "that all necessary things, such as water, a mill, a garden, a bakehouse, should if possible be contained within the monastery, and that divers arts should be exercised there."[2] Monks were to be

[1] Ibid. et p. 432.

[2] C. 66.

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their own millers and bakers, farmers and gardeners; and doubtless such strict observers of the rule as the brethren of Citeaux had already sunk wells and enclosed a garden. Doubtless, too, they had erected a mill, though it may be safely conjectured that it was not so large as that of Farfa, a convent which was built after the pattern of Cluny, the mill of which was an edifice seventy feet long and twenty broad, with a tower over it; nor had it adjoining, as at Farfa, a manufactory where goldsmiths and other artificers were at work.[1] At Cluny the mill was an important place, where specially before Easter and Christmas a servant of the abbey ground the corn of which the altar-breads were to be made, dressed in an alb, and with a veil enveloping his head.[2] The bakehouse, too, was not left without ornament; it was adorned with boughs of walnut tree;[3] many things connected with household affairs were at Cluny consecrated with rites of an almost oriental beauty, which reminds one of patriarchal times; thus the new bread was specially blessed in the refectory, as were the first-fruits of beans; and, again, the first grapes, which were blessed at the altar during mass.[4] Our poor Cistercians were as yet struggling for existence, and the place where they baked their coarse food was not so picturesque as that of Cluny; but they did not mean by the regulations above quoted to make use of mills and bakehouses out of the precincts of the abbey; and they ex-

[1] Ann. Ben. tom. iv. p. 208.
[2] Udal. iii. 13, ap. D'Achery, Spicil. tom. i.
[3] Calmet, Com. Lit. 2. 428.
[4] Udal. i. 35.

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pressly say a little further on that "they will receive lands far from the dwelling-place of men, vineyards and fields and woods and water to make mills, but for their own use." The wood of Citeaux was, therefore, already an active scene where the monks might be seen working in silence, broken only by the stroke of the spade or the noise of the water turning the wheels of the mill, or the bell calling them from their labour. The meaning of the above regulation, then, was that they were not to possess large domains, with wood and water, corn-fields and vineyards, which they did not cultivate themselves but let out to tenants. Many were the broad lands possessed by the monks of Cluny, with vassals and servants, both men and women. For the use of the three hundred brethren, as well as of the poor and the guests of the abbey, 560 sextarii of wheat and 500 of rye monthly were stored up in granaries from the various farms that were within reach.[1] The possessions of the abbey were divided into districts, over each of which was a dean, appointed to take care that it sent in the proper quantity of whatever was required of it.[2] As for those lands which were too far from Cluny to send thither their produce, the corn and wine which grew there was sold on the spot, and paid to the Camerarius, who procured clothing and all necessaries for the brethren.[3] Italy, Spain, and England sent the produce of their lands to clothe the brethren; one province especially, from the Rhone to the

[1] Dispositio facta a D. Pet. Ven., Baluz. Miscel. tom. iii. p. 72.
[2] Udal. iii. 5. [3] Ib. iii. 11.

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Alps and the sea, was appointed to this duty, and sent its treasures to the camera of Cluny. An English manor, given by King Stephen, usually furnished the monks with shoes and stockings.[1] Such was Cluny, and that not in a time of degeneracy, but under St. Hugh, and afterwards under Peter the Venerable, when the monks fasted and prayed, and rose in the night to sing psalms; when its vast revenues were not misspent, but daily fed a large number of poor. It was a vast kingdom where Christ reigned, where His saints rested in peace, and which raised an image of peace in a world of strife and bloodshed. Happy were the vassals transferred from a secular lord to the rule of the abbot of Cluny: instead of being robbed and harried two or three times a year, by exactions over and above their rent, and bought and sold like the cattle on the estate, they were treated as brethren and sisters.[2] A castle given to the Cluniacs, instead of a den of thieves, became an oratory. If the brethren sold the produce of the estates at a distance from the abbey, their dealings were marked with a fairness and a generosity which showed that they trafficked not for gain, but for their own support, and to feed the poor.[3]

Still, with all this, what our Cistercians said was quite true; Cluny had, we will not say degenerated from, but changed St. Benedict's institution. The possessors of these wide domains, though they lived a life of more than ordinary strictness, never touch-

[1] Disp. facta &c., ubi sup. [2] Pet. Ven. Ep. 28.
[3] Udal. iii. 11.

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ing animal food, and mortifying the flesh with watchings and fasts, yet could not be said to be Christ's poor ones, in the same sense as men who had nothing to depend upon but their own manual labour. It may be said that Cluny was an ancient abbey, enriched by the bounty of kings and bishops, and that Citeaux was but a poor monastery, struggling into existence; but it is also certain that a stricter profession of poverty was the very distinction between Citeaux and other abbeys; if ever, therefore, it became rich, it was because it broke through its original institution, whilst the riches of Cluny were not necessarily a mark of decline, but a legitimate development. The idea of the monastic state in Stephen's mind was quite different from that conceived by Peter the Venerable.

We have purposely put off the first part of Alberic and Stephen's regulation as to the possessions of the convent, because it forms the most striking contrast with the spirit of Cluny. They would not possess any of the property which had originally belonged to the parochial clergy. The Church, about the end of the eleventh century, was endeavouring to win back the tithes and the revenues of livings from the hands of their lay possessors; but the iron gauntlet of the feudal noble was found to retain as tight a hold as the dead hand of the Church. The tithes had probably first come into the possession of laymen by the gift of the bishops themselves, in times of danger; the system of feudalism was extended even to Church property, and the parish churches were

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put as fiefs into laymen's hands, on condition that they would defend the Church. Though they were never meant to be a perpetual gift, yet the nobles who had them in possession would not give them up; they had won them by their good sword, and keep them they would. Other nobles had simply seized upon the tithes by violence, principally in the lax times of the Carlovingian dynasty; and the same injustice which had at first robbed the Church, afterwards resisted it. In vain did St. Gregory VII. and Urban II. order the restitution of tithes, the nobles in very many cases would not disgorge the spoil. The supreme pontiffs acted with the greatest moderation in not pronouncing, though they often threatened, the sentence of excommunication. In the meanwhile, a middle course was found; laymen possessing tithes were allowed to give them up to monasteries, or to found religious houses with them, if the consent of the bishop of the diocese was first obtained. In this way tithes first got into the hands of monasteries; and though this was not the best possible course, as was afterwards proved, yet it was at the time a remedy for a glaring evil. Bishops, who at one time vehemently opposed this transfer, were led to sanction it by the necessity of the case. In other instances, bishops themselves, with the sanction of their chapter, gave parish churches into the hands of abbeys, thinking that they would exercise their patronage with the greatest wisdom. The feeling which induced the Cistercians to rule that their monastery should possess no tithes, was probably rather a zeal for poverty, than a notion

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that the thing was wrong in itself. A monk, according to the Cistercian idea, was not to administer the holy Sacraments nor to teach, but he was to remain within his cloister, in prayer and contemplation, in poverty and mortification. In the regulation quoted above, tithes and church property in general is classed with mills, and bakehouses and lands; all come under the same head, as being possessions, and therefore opposed to poverty. Stephen himself, when abbot of Citeaux, as will be seen by-and-by, was present at the council of Troyes, where the Templars were allowed to possess tithes, if the bishop consented; and St. Bernard, his disciple, himself wrote to an archbishop to exhort him to consent to the gift of tithes presented by a layman to a monastery.[1] Their argument, therefore, was not that monks, as being laymen, cannot under any circumstances possess tithes, but that, as cultivating lands of their own, they do not come under the old distribution of church property, one-third to the bishop, another to the clergy, and the rest to the poor who have no means of earning their own living. Their principal reason then was, that monks must till their ground with their own hands, instead of living upon property which belongs to the clergy. Very different were the maxims of Cluny; one bishop alone gave sixty parish churches to different priories of the Cluniac order.[2] Exclusive of the parish churches in and about Cluny itself, more than one hundred and fifty churches were at one time in the gift of

[1] Ep. 316. [2] Pet. Ven. de Miraculis, 1. 23.

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the abbot.[1] It is easy, from this fact, to frame an idea of the almost pontifical power of the ruler of this vast abbey; and the whole of the affairs of the house were conducted on a scale of corresponding grandeur. It was not in the person of the brethren that this magnificence was seen, at least not in the good times of Cluny, for the price which their habit was to cost was fixed,[2] and they were not above menial arts, such as taking their turn in the kitchen as cooks; but the church and the buildings of the abbey were in a style which befitted its importance. So far, then, were they from giving up tithes and church lands, in order to depend on their own labour for daily bread, that manual labour was very little practised at all. Udalric, the compiler of their customs, says that he must ingenuously confess that their manual labour was confined to shelling beans, weeding the garden, and sometimes baking bread. Their time was occupied in long and splendid services in the church, in reading, praying, and meditation, and in the usual routine of the abbey. They were even allowed to write after vespers, when all were sitting in the cloister in silence, provided the pen slipped so noiselessly over the parchment, that no sound broke the perfect stillness.[3] How is it possible, says Peter the Venerable, for monks fed on poor vegetable diet, when even that scanty fare is often cut off by fasts, to work like common labourers in the burning heat, in showers of rain

[1] Bibl. Clun. col. 1753. [2] Udal. 1. 30.
[3] Udal. 2. 24.

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and snow, and in the bitter cold? Besides, it was indecent that monks, which are the fine linen of the sanctuary, should be begrimed with dirt, and bent down with rustic labours.[1] The good part of Mary must not thus yield to that of Martha. And yet Stephen and his companions found it possible to do all this. Their poor worn-out bodies did not sink under their heavy burdens, nor were the garments of their souls less white because they were thus exposed to suffer from the inclemency of the season. It was, indeed, inexplicable, even to their contemporaries, how they thus could live; but the secret lay in the fervency of the spirit, which kept up the lagging flesh and blood; their lives were above nature, and because, for Christ's sake, they gave up church-lands and tithes in order to be poor, He bore them up, so that they did not faint under their labours. Besides, they were not the less like the lowly Mary sitting at the Lord's feet, because they worked in the fields; suffering is not incompatible with the better part. The order which produced St. Bernard cannot be accused of not being contemplative. While their bodies were bent in agricultural labours, their souls were raised to heaven. Again, they had an expedient by which they were enabled to remain within a short distance of the cloister, however scattered their farms might be, and thus no time was lost in journeys to and from the place of their labour, and they could always return to the duties of the choir, and be within the monastery

[1] Pet. Ven. Ep. 1. 28.

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at the times set apart for meditation. Alberic at once felt the difficulty of keeping up the choir service, when the monks might be obliged to sleep in the farm-houses, or, as they were called, granges of the monastery, and he determined on obviating it by turning to account the institution of lay-brethren, which had subsisted for a long time in the Benedictine order. It arose from the nature of things, and not by a regular distinction into choir and lay-brethren, at the time of the taking of the vow, as it was afterwards to be. Amongst a great number of monks, many could neither read nor write, and had not faculties for learning the choir services; it was natural that these should be employed in the many menial offices which a large monastery would require. Hence arose the institution of lay-brethren; it however appears to have taken its most systematic shape at the very beginning of the Cistercian order. Some of them dwelt in the abbey itself, others in the scattered and lonely granges around it; they kept the flocks and herds of the community, and were its tailors, shoemakers, and blacksmiths. Those who were in the granges were excused from the fasts of the order, except in Advent, and on the Fridays from the 14th of September to Lent.[1] Whenever the bell of the abbey rang for a canonical hour they fell on their knees, and in heart joined the brethren who sang the office in the abbey church. There were thus in every Cistercian abbey "two monasteries, one of the lay-brethren, another of the

[1] Nomasticon, Inst. Cap. Gen. I. 14.

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clerics."[1] The choir brethren were thus enabled always to work within a short distance of the abbey, and were strictly forbidden to remain a whole night in any of the granges, without pressing necessity. The relations between the choir and lay-brethren were of the closest kind: instead of being treated as slaves, as they were by their feudal lords, these poor children of the soil, and artisans, were looked upon as brothers, and were by a special law of the order to partake in all spiritual advantages as though they were monks, which in fact they were in all but the name, for they made their vows in the presence of the abbot, like the other brethren. Politicians who love equality and liberty may thank the monks for placing on a level the nobleman and the villain, and for ennobling the cultivator of the soil by stooping down to his lowliness, and partaking of his labours. The world may thank Alberic for this scheme, by which the choir brother imparted his spiritual goods to the poor lay-brother, who in turn by his labour gave him time for singing the praises of God during the night, and for meditating on His glories continually. The disciples of Alberic and Stephen in after time followed their steps; and Alanus, one of the greatest of the schoolmen, finished his life in the rough and lowly labours of a lay-brother of Citeaux, and was represented in a recumbent figure on his tomb, in their habit, holding a rosary in his hand. There are few more touching pictures in the annals of Citeaux than the story[2] of the poor lay brother sitting to watch by

[1] Dial. inter Clun. et Cist. 3. 43.
[2] Manriquez in ann. 1129, c. 6.

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night in the lonely grange, thinking of his brethren in the abbey, while they celebrated the feast of the Assumption, and repeating over and over again the angelic salutation with such devotion, that the angels brought news of it to St. Bernard, then preaching on the subject of the feast-day at Clairvaux.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE TIMES OF ALBERIC

THE customs of Citeaux have been thus minutely contrasted with the customs of other places, that the reader might know with whom he had to do, what Cistercians were, and why they were not Cluniacs, or Carthusians, or simply Benedictines, though they so strictly professed St. Benedict's rule. They are not an order yet, but only a monastery, and that a very poor one; it was left to Stephen afterwards to constitute them an order; they were not even yet Cistercians, but only the poor brethren of New Minster in the wood of Citeaux, and we have called them Cistercians by anticipation. Alberic's rules were very well kept by his brethren; so that the fervour of the monastery began to be noised abroad. Their old patron, the Duke of Burgundy, was astonished at them; while some other monks put themselves in the way of receiving the alms of the faithful, these brethren hid themselves from the world. It seemed wonderful how they could subsist in such a damp, out-of-the-way hole as that in which they had seated themselves. Nothing was heard of them, except that day and night went their bells, first the bells for matins, then the great bell tolling out for the lay-brethren to get up, and

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all day long for the hours, and for vespers in the evening, and compline at nightfall. Nobody knew how they lived, except that their white habits were seen in the fields, as they worked; and yet they asked for nothing. There they were, a wonderful fact in the way of all irreligion and wickedness, men whose faith was not an abstraction, but who evidently believed that Christ had come down from heaven to die, since such was their love for Him that they chose to be like Him in all things, even in suffering. And there was the prior Stephen, leading them out to work with his sweet smiling face, notwithstanding all this suffering.[1] His spirit had continued unbroken through all his trials, and well might he now be joyful in the Lord, since God had so blessed him in them; he had borne the cross when it entered into his soul, and he now tasted the joy which it always brings with it. Truly "Wisdom is justified of her children," and so thought Odo of Burgundy, for he loved the poor monks, and the forest of Citeaux, and he built him near the abbey a lodge, which in after times was still called the palace even in its ruins. At most of the principal festivals he would come there with his court; he would not celebrate them in the cathedral of Châlons, or in the monastery of St. Benignus of Dijon, but he loved better the brethren of the new monastery, for they sang the praises of God so sweetly, and with such joy, that his heart was touched, and caught fire at their devotion. He found, in the same year as Alberic made the above rules, an

[1] Guil. Malm. Gest. Reg. lib. iv.

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opportunity of assisting the monks.[1] It will be remembered that only a portion of Citeaux had been given by the Viscount of Beaune; the rest had been given them by Odo of Burgundy, who agreed to pay the lord of Beaune twenty solidi a year for the hire of the land. The collectors of the revenues of the lord of Beaune, however, found it a much easier matter to get the money from the monks, who would bear patiently to be oppressed, than from the people of the Duke of Burgundy. They therefore applied to the monastery for the twenty shillings, instead of applying to the treasury of the Duke. The monks paid the demand in silence, though they could ill afford it out of the poor return which their lands yielded. At length, Odo heard of the exaction, and determined to free them from it for ever, by assigning a portion of his own ground to the lord of Beaune, out of the produce of which he was to help himself to his twenty shillings; and the Viscount, in return, freed the monks for ever from all claims which he himself or his heirs might have upon them. This was indeed the last service which the good duke rendered them, for he set out for the Holy Land that very year in which he conferred this benefit on the monastery. Jerusalem had not long been taken by the Crusaders, and Christendom was now arming

[1] The Cistercian annalist places this gift in the year 1102, when it could not have happened, for Duke Odo set out for Jerusalem in 1101. The charter preserved in Du Chesne, Histoire Généalogique des Ducs de Bourgogne, says that it was "post biennium," that is, in the third year after the foundation of Citeaux in March 1098. It would thus come into the year 1101. This charter also proves that the author of "l'Art de vérifier les Dates" is wrong in making him leave Burgundy in 1097.

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in support of Godfrey's new kingdom, which was hemmed in on all sides by infidels. The Crusaders had obtained possession of the holy sepulchre; but as if to show that the keeping of this precious treasure depended on the good behaviour of Christians, God never permitted them to hold it by a firm tenure. Its honoured guardians had to defend it at the point of the sword; the harness was hardly ever off their back, and no crown could be less easy than that of Jerusalem. Odo of Burgundy never reached the Holy Land; he died in 1102, almost as soon as he had reached the army of the Crusaders. On his death-bed the sweet song of the Cistercian choir rung in his ears, and he desired that his body should not lie in a foreign land, but should be carried across sea and land to be buried at Citeaux. So his followers obeyed his dying request, and brought his remains back to Burgundy. In dying he gave the last proof of affection for the brethren of Citeaux, by wishing to be buried among them. He might have been buried beneath the walls of many a cathedral or abbey church, better befitting the high and puissant Duke of Burgundy, but he chose to lie where his faithful monks would watch around his body, and say a prayer for his soul as they passed his tomb. Times were indeed changed with the old wood of Citeaux, which had a few years before been the habitation of wild beasts; and now the funeral procession of a prince might be seen moving through it; and it was a strange meeting, that of the banners and coronet and the armour of the deceased duke with the white habit of the monks, who had renounced the world and its

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honours. They had given up pomp and grandeur, and now one of the highest princes in Christendom was come to lie down at their feet, that they by their intervention might assist his soul before the tribunal of Christ. Truly many men would wish to live in a king's court, but most would rather in death be with the monks. It is not known in what part of the first church of Citeaux Duke Odo was buried; indeed it is doubtful whether his body did not lie in the cemetery among the monks. In the magnificent church afterwards built at Citeaux, his tomb was under the porch of the church, in a place called the chapel of the dukes, where his two sons were buried with him.

To be the burial-place of the princes of the earth was not however enough for Citeaux; and however regular and admirable was his abbey, yet Alberic had one care which pressed upon his soul; it seemed as if the very existence of the convent was likely to pass away with the present generation, for no novices arrived to fill up the ranks of those who died. If matters did not mend, Citeaux would return again to its former possessors, wolves and wild boars. Alberic's patience was sorely tried; it was not only that their name would perish from the earth, which would be but a light evil, but the failure of Citeaux would be a proof to the world that the monks of Molesme were right, and that St. Benedict's rule could not now be observed to the letter. It was too much for mortal man to bear, it might be said, and God had shown His disapproval of this over-strictness by depriving the monastery of spiritual children. They passed many a long

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day in expectation of an increase of numbers, but the monks who joined them were far too few to give hope of the ultimate continuance of the monastery. Alberic however persevered, feeling sure that at all events it was God's will that he should continue in his present position, and he left the future in God's hands. Stephen and he had seen worse days than this, when they were compelled to leave Molesme, and to betake themselves to the solitude of Hauz, and it might please God to reward them with the sight of an increase of their spiritual children before they died. Alberic certainly did die long before Citeaux became what it afterwards was; but our Lord is said to have given him a supernatural intimation that his order would one day flourish beyond his expectations. The vision is mentioned by no contemporary writer, but we give it, because nothing can be said against the truth of it, in itself, and because it contains some remarkable circumstances. Considering the influence that Citeaux afterwards had upon the fortune of the Church, there is no improbability in the supposition that our blessed Lord might, in His condescension, be pleased to console the abbot when his courage was flagging, by extraordinary means. It is said, that one day, the community was surprised by the entrance of a clerk, who offered himself as a novice. The porch of the monastery at which the new-comer knocked was not an inviting one; it was not an imposing archway with a large gate, with bolts and bars; it was a poor door of wicker-work, at which hung a huge iron knocker, at the sound of which a porter

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appeared with his usual salutation of *Deo gratias*, as if he would say, "Thanks be to God that He has sent us a stranger to feed and entertain." This time, however, the new-comer seemed to be no stranger; he seemed to recognise the porter, though the monk could not recollect ever to have seen him before. When brought to the abbot, he appeared to know him also, as well as the prior Stephen, and all the brethren. At length he solved the mystery, by relating his history. He was a clerk, who when a student of the schools of Lyons, saw in a vision a valley, stretched at the foot of a mountain, and on the mountain was a city of surpassing beauty, on which none could gaze without joy, as its radiant towers crowned the eminence on which it was built. The beholder felt a strange and irresistible desire to enter its gates and dwell there. Around the base of the mountain, however, was a broad river, the waters of which flowed about it, and were too deep for the traveller to ford. As he roamed about in quest of a place where he might cross it, he saw upon the bank twelve or fourteen poor men washing their garments in the stream. Amongst them was one clad in a white garment of dazzling brightness, and his countenance and form were very different from the rest; he went about helping the poor men to wash the spots off their clothes; when he had helped one, he went to help another. The clerk went up to this august person and said, "What men are ye?" And he answered, "These poor men are doing penance, and washing themselves from their sins; I am the Son of God, Jesus Christ, without whose aid neither they nor any one

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else can do good. This beautiful city which thou seest is Paradise, where I dwell; he who has washed his clothes white, that is, done penance for his sins, shall enter into it. Thou thyself hast been searching long enough for the way to enter into it, but there is no other way but this one which leads to it." After these words the sleeper awoke, and pondered over the vision. Soon after he returned home from the schools, and related to the bishop of Châlons, with whom he was intimate, what he had seen in sleep. The bishop advised him to quit the world for the cloister, and above others recommended the new monastery at Citeaux. Thither the clerk went, and he found everything unpromising enough; the place was barren and desolate, and the brethren dwelling "with the wild beasts." The gate of the monastery did not look a whit more inviting, but what was his astonishment when he saw the porter who answered to the sound of the rude knocker; he immediately saw that he was one of the men whom he had seen washing their clothes white in the stream. On seeing the abbot and the other brethren, he observed the same thing, and he at once fell on his knees at the feet of Alberic, and begged to be received as a novice. He afterwards became a good monk, and succeeded Stephen as prior.

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CHAPTER IX

THE DEATH OF ALBERIC

FROM the time of the admission of this monk, which took place in the year 1104, there is a great gap in the Cistercian annals. The greater portion of those chapters in the greater and smaller Exordium of Citeaux which relate to the abbacy of Alberic have been lost; and nothing more is heard of Stephen till the year 1109, when Alberic died. The Exordium simply mentions his death in the following few words: "Now the man of God, Alberic, after having exercised himself in the school of Christ by the discipline of the rule for nine years and a half, departed to the Lord, a man glorious in faith and virtue, and therefore to be blessed by God in life everlasting for his merit." He died on the 26th of January. St. Alberic has been canonised by the veneration of the faithful, and many miracles are said to have taken place at his tomb. Certainly, if any one deserved well of the Church, it was St. Alberic. The regulations which he passed into laws may be called the first statutes of the order, and they first gave to Citeaux a tangible form by which it was distinguished from other monasteries. He worked on in faith, without seeing the fruits of his labours, and he was called away from it when

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the infant community was in great perplexity. It seemed dying away as its members successively died, and bade fair not to outlast its first generation. His death was therefore a most painful trial to Stephen, who was thus deprived of his friend and companion, whom he had found at Molesme, when he first came there, and who had shared with him all his hardships; now he was left alone when he most needed counsel and support. Stephen's spirit seems however to have risen with the thought that his dear friend already possessed his crown, and might help him with his prayers even more than he had done with his counsels when alive. He had as prior to incense and sprinkle with holy water the body of his friend, and to throw earth upon it, when it lay in the grave; and then the procession returned in inverse order, the lay-brethren and the convent first, and himself last, with the cross borne before him.[1] They then repaired to the chapter, where he addressed them a discourse which has been preserved. "All of us have alike a share in this great loss, and I am but a poor comforter, who myself need comfort. Ye have lost a venerable father and ruler of your souls; I have lost, not only a father and ruler, but a friend, a fellow-soldier and a chief warrior in the battles of the Lord, whom our venerable father Robert, from the very cradle of our monastic institute, had brought up in one and the same convent, in admirable learning and piety. He is gone from us, but not from God, and if not from God, then not from us; for this is the

[1] Usus Cist. p. i. 98.

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right and property of saints, that when they quit this life they leave their body to their friends, and carry away their friends with them in their mind. We have amongst us this dear body and singular pledge of our beloved father, and he himself has carried us all away with him in his mind with an affectionate love; yea, if he himself is borne up to God, and joined with Him in undivided love, he has joined us too, who are in him, to God. What room is there for grief? Blessed is the lot, more blessed he to whom that lot has fallen, most blessed we to be carried up to such a presence, for nothing can be more joyful for the soldiers of Christ than to leave this garment of flesh, and to fly away to Him for love of whom they have borne so many toils. The warrior has got his reward, the runner has grasped his prize, the conqueror has won his crown, he who has taken possession prays for a palm for us. Why then should we grieve? Why mourn for him who is in joy? Why be cast down for him who is glad? Why do we throw ourselves before God with murmurs and mournful words, when he, who has been borne up to the stars, is pained at our grief, if the blessed can feel pain; he who by an earnest longing prays that we may have a like consummation. Let us not mourn for the soldier who is at rest; let us mourn for ourselves who are placed in the front of battle, and let us turn our sad and mournful words into prayers, begging our father who is in triumph not to suffer the roaring lion and savage enemy to triumph over us." Such were Stephen's words when he had just parted with his dearest friend; as usual he seems to rise

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with his difficulties. Indeed he had full need of this bold spirit, for he was about to succeed the sainted Alberic in his most painful dignity. The monks unanimously elected him their abbot, and he found himself with the whole weight of the spiritual and temporal direction of the new convent on his shoulders. William of Malmesbury says that he was absent at the time that he was elected, and some suppose that he withdrew from Citeaux for fear of being elected. It does not however appear how his absence could have prevented his election, unless he intended to leave Citeaux altogether, of which there is no record whatever. Saints fly from dignities which bring with them rank and splendour; but the poor abbey of Citeaux had nothing to recommend it but hardship and labour, and these were a species of distinction from which Stephen was not the man to shrink. It is therefore most probable that some other motive occasioned his absence, though it does not appear what it was. He elected Robert, the monk who saw the vision which we have related, prior in his room.

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CHAPTER X

STEPHEN AS ABBOT

STEPHEN found himself heir to all St. Alberic's difficulties as well as to his dignity. He received from him a convent perfect in its internal arrangement, but one which men seemed rather disposed to admire at a distance than to enter. The new abbot, however, felt certain that the principle on which Citeaux had been founded was right; it was one which must in time catch all the ardent spirits in the Church who wished to be monks in order to crucify the flesh and not merely to seek for peace. Hatred of poverty had been the great bane of monasteries, and his aim was to restore the primitive discipline of St. Benedict, which had well-nigh been forgotten. In order to do this, he must not only exhibit it in his own person, but he must create, so to speak, a monastery in full operation, one to which novices crowded, and which was to last to the end of the world—a school of Christian discipline. He took what would appear a strange expedient to entice novices to Citeaux. His first act was to all appearance the cutting off all earthly support from the monastery. Hugo, the successor of Odo, the Duke of Burgundy, who was buried at Citeaux, followed his father's example in fre-

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quenting the church of the monastery on all great festivals. He brought with him a large train of nobles, whose splendid appointments were but an ill match for the simplicity and poverty of the church. The presence of this brilliant array seemed to Stephen ill suited to the place; the jangling of steel spurs and the varied colours of the dress of the courtiers were a poor accompaniment to the grave chant and the poor habit of the brethren. Every one knows that the sight of a king's court is pleasing, and men go a great way to see it; now the echo of earthly pleasure and the presence of earthly joy are inconsistent with the profession of a monk, whose conversation ought to be in heaven. Men may say what they will about ideal perfection, but it is a sure fact that saints are very much nearer perfection than we may think. Human frailties are on the long run unavoidable; but, at all events, the frailty of liking the vicinity of princes and nobles is not one of these, for Stephen did avoid it. He declared that no prince should henceforth hold his court in the church of Citeaux. Apparently this act was at once cutting himself off from all earthly protection; the presence of a ducal court was no empty show; it was a guarantee that swords would be drawn and lances put in rest to defend Citeaux. All this Stephen, as it seemed, threw away; he knew that God specially guarded the destitute, and he preferred the guardianship of saints and angels to that of an earthly prince. God rewarded his faith, for he did not ultimately lose the favour of Hugo, who after his death rested side by side with his father

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in the chapel under the porch of the abbey-church. Before that time, however, the community had suffered many a hardship, which might have been averted had the powerful Duke of Burgundy been as good a friend to the convent as heretofore. Stephen's next step was one with which modern notions of monasticism are still more inconsistent. He forbade that, says the Exordium, "in the house of God, in which they wished to serve God devoutly day and night, anything should be found which savoured of pride and excess, or can in any way corrupt poverty, that guardian of virtue which they had chosen of their own accord." According to this, no crucifixes of gold or silver were to be used; one candlestick alone was to light up the church, and that not branching with elaborate ornaments, and studded with precious stones, but of iron; censers were to be of brass; chasubles, not of gold and silver tissue, or of rich silk, but of common stuff; albs and amices of linen; copes, tunicles, and dalmatics were inexorably excluded. Even the chalices were not to be of gold, but silver gilt, as was also to be the pipe through which they received the blessed Blood of the Lord in the Holy Eucharist. This was indeed a strange way of attracting novices: the monastic churches were frequented by men on account of the splendour of the services, for sacred vessels, and altars adorned with gold and gems, for the number of ecclesiastics in splendid vestments passing to and fro before their eyes in seemly order. But by this act Stephen proclaimed to the world that they did not wish their church to be crowded with visitors; they wished to

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remain known only to God, in the heart of their marshy forest; but he knew that there must be many in the Church who longed to serve God in poverty and oblivion, and he reckoned upon receiving them into Citeaux. The novice who came there must come from the pure love of God, since he even gave up what was considered the heritage of monks, and the compensation for their toils, a striking ceremonial and solemn rites. This is indeed very different from the notion which our fancy frames of monks, men of warm imaginations, who retired to a cloister to wear a picturesque habit, and to be free from toils; and it reads a salutary lesson to those whose Catholicism consists in a love of "æsthetic" religion. Stephen did not at all by rejecting these means of external devotion intend to pronounce against the consecration of the riches of the world to the service of the sanctuary; he was a monk, and had to do with monks alone; it was quite certain that St. Benedict intended poverty to be an essential feature of the cloister, and Stephen was determined to prove that St. Benedict's rule might be kept in the twelfth century as it had been in the sixth. The Church was not in her dotage, and her children could do then what they had done before. Another reason for the rejection of splendour of worship was because it interfered with meditation, properly so called, the contemplation of heavenly things without the aid of the senses. Not only were splendid vestments excluded from Citeaux, but, as we learn from its early statutes,[1] sculptures and pictures were not

[1] Inst. Cap. Gen. i. 20.

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allowed in the church, "because while the attention is given to such things, the profit of godly meditation and the discipline of religious gravity are often neglected." Without determining which of the two is the better, it will at once be seen that the devotion which floats to heaven on the sounds of beautiful music, and is kept alive by a splendid religious scene, is very different from that which, with closed eyes and senses shut up, sings the praises of God, and at the same time is fixed on the heavenly mysteries without any intermediate channel. This latter species of devotion can only exist without danger in the Catholic Church, whose creed is fixed, and her faith unchangeable, while she herself is an external body, the image of her Lord. Stephen, therefore, could securely reject to a certain extent the aid of external religion; for his mind, trained in the Catholic faith, had a definite object to rest upon, the Holy Trinity, with the inexhaustible and incomprehensible treasures of contemplation therein contained. Though the chalice was not of gold, he knew what was in it, even his blessed Lord; and he could think upon the saints, with their palms and crowns in heaven, though their images were not sculptured about him. Again, though sculptures and paintings were not allowed, yet one image is expressly excepted; crucifixes of wood, painted to the life, were placed in the church, and these must, from the colouring and material, have been much more real than golden or silver figures, however well sculptured, could have been. It should also be observed, that archi-

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tecture is not excluded from this list of prohibitions; the old church of Citeaux, built in Stephen's time, still existed when Martenne[1] came to visit the monastery; it stood in all its simplicity beside the vast and splendid edifice, a strange relic of the ancient times of Citeaux; yet, notwithstanding the contrast, its beauty is praised by the Benedictine. The line which Stephen marked out for himself was therefore definite; costliness, pomp, and unnecessary ornaments were excluded, but beauty of shape was kept. He would not have a misshapen chasuble, though he eschewed cloth of gold, nor would he have an unsightly church, though he loved simplicity. It is scarcely possible to conceive a better type of Citeaux than a great Norman church, such as is seen in the abbeys of Caen, with its vast round arches and simple shafts clustering round a massive pier; even its austere capitals, looking like an imitation of the architecture of the Roman empire, might come in as the counterpart of Stephen's notion of going back to St. Benedict as his model.

These new regulations of the abbot of Citeaux were the more bold, because they were directly opposed to what may be called the leading religious men of the day. St. Hugh of Cluny died the very year that they were put in force, and the state of

[1] Voy. Lit. i. 223. Martenne there incidentally says that this church was consecrated in 1106; if so, it must have been a different church from that built by the Duke of Burgundy. This event is not recorded by the Cistercian historians; no notice has been taken of it in the text, because the Benedictine gives no authority for the assertion, though it is exceedingly likely in itself.

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things which he had introduced at Cluny of course acquired a new sanctity from the saintly memory which he had left behind him. Differing as they did in other respects, nothing can show the difference of his spirit and that of Stephen more than the contrast between them in this particular. St. Hugh had a great fondness for ecclesiastical ornaments. "He said within himself," writes his biographer, "with the Prophet: 'Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thine honour dwelleth'; and whatsoever the devotion of the faithful gave, he entirely consecrated to adorning the church or to the expenses of the poor."[1] The vast church which he built at Cluny (as it is said, by the divine command conveyed in a vision), was reckoned the most beautiful of his time; it contained stalls in the choir for 220 monks. It had two side aisles and two transepts, and two vast lanterns gave light to the whole. At the upper end was a beautiful apse supported by eight marble columns, each of which could hardly be embraced by two men. All the precious things of the world were consecrated to the adornment of this splendid basilica: one beautiful corona of lights, the gift of Matilda, queen of England, made after the pattern mentioned in Exodus,[2] especially caught the eye of beholders, as it hung before the high altar: it was made of gold and silver, and its delicate branches blazed with crystals and beryls interspersed among its beautifully-wrought lilies.[3] Even

[1] Hildebert ap. Bibl. Clun. 420. [2] Exod. xxv. 31–39.
[3] Bibl. Clun. 1640.

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the immense hall which was the refectory of the convent had its own religious ornaments; it was painted all round with figures of saints of the Old and New Testament, and of the founders and benefactors of Cluny: but the principal object was a large figure of our Lord, with a representation of the terrible day of judgment. All the ceremonies in the church were most solemn and imposing, seen by the dim light of its narrow windows[1] cut through the thick wall, or with the sun shining through the ample lanterns; or again with its blaze of lights, and specially the seven before the holy cross on the night of our Lord's nativity, when the church was adorned with rich hangings, and all the bells rang out, and the brethren walked in procession round the cloisters, their hearts burning with the words of good St. Hugh spoken the evening before in the chapter.[2] Who could blame the holy abbot for enlisting the senses in the service of religion? he could not be accused of pomp or pride, who in his simplicity took his turn in washing the beans in the kitchen;[3] his heart, in the beauties of the sanctuary saw but an image of the worship in the courts of heaven, and was not entangled or brought down to earth by the blaze of splendour around him. Still all this, as we have said before, was a development upon St. Benedict's rule and does not seem to have been contemplated by him: if he had walked in a Cluniac cloister, and had seen its grotesque orna-

[1] Ann. Ben. tom. v. p. 252. [2] Udal. 1. 11. 46. Bibl. Clun. 1273.
[3] Udal. 1. 46.

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ments, with the apes and centaurs peeping out from the rich foliage, the huntsmen with horns and hounds, and the knights fighting together on the walls,[1] he would hardly have known where he was. Stephen's doubtless was the original conception of monasticism, which time had altered, if it had not corrupted. St. Hugh would have the church all glorious within, and her clothing without of wrought gold; but Stephen wished her to be like her Lord, in whom was found no comeliness that men should desire Him; but Stephen's pastoral staff was a crooked stick such as an old man might carry; St. Hugh's was overlaid with foliage wrought in silver, mixed with ivory:[2] yet the souls of both were the workmanship of that One blessed Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as He will. Though the abbot of Cluny took advantage of all the treasures of art and nature, and turned them to the service of God, while on the other hand Stephen in many cases rejected the help of external religion, yet both could find a place in the Catholic Church, whose worship is not carnal, nor yet so falsely spiritual as to cease to be the body of the Lord.

[1] St. Bern. Apol. ad Guil. [2] Voy. Lit. i. 226.

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CHAPTER XI

STEPHEN IN TIMES OF WANT

THE consequence of Stephen's thus boldly casting off the protection of the Duke of Burgundy, and all that could attract the world into the solitude of Citeaux, soon began to be visible. In the year 1110 it was discovered that the world was inclined to forget those who had forgotten it; for either from the failure of crops, or from some other unknown cause, the convent was reduced to a state not only of poverty but of beggary, and no one was found to relieve it. Stephen's was but a poor abbacy; he had now been scarcely a year in his new dignity, and he found himself lord of a starving community; but he had already counted the cost, and he knew that his Lord would not leave His servants to die of want in the depths of their forest. His countenance was therefore not a whit less smiling on account of his difficulties, and he cheered up his brethren by his earnest words. At length the extremity of want came upon the monastery, and one day the brother cellarer came to the abbot and informed him that there was not enough for one day's provision in the house. "Saddle me two asses," was Stephen's only answer; when they were ready, the abbot himself mounted one, and

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bade a lay-brother mount the other. He then ordered his companion to beg bread from door to door in a certain village, while he himself went to beg in another, and he appointed a place where they should meet after making their rounds. To a passing stranger the holy man must have looked very like one of those Sarabaitæ or wandering monks, of whom St. Benedict speaks, on a voyage in quest of gain, so strange must have been his figure, mounted as he was on the ignoble beast, in his white habit and his rough cowl over his shaven head; but his face was radiant with joy, for never was he more like his blessed Lord than when he was thus reduced to beggary. After having gone through the village, begging as he went, he met his lay-brother returning from his task; on comparing notes the brother's wallet was found to be very much more full than his superior's. "Where hast thou been begging?" said the abbot, with a smile; "I see thou hast been gleaning in thicker stubble than I. Where, prithee, hast thou been gleaning?" The lay-brother answered, "That priest whom you know full well filled my wallet," and he mentioned the priest's name. The abbot at once recognised the priest to be one who had obtained his benefice by simony. It was then in the thick of the contest about investitures, and Stephen shuddered at receiving aught from hands stained with such a sin; and he groaned aloud and said, "Alas for thee! why didst thou receive aught there? thou didst not know then that that priest had been simoniacally ordained; and what he has accepted is leprosy and rapine. As the Lord liveth, of all that he has given

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us, we will taste nothing. God forbid that we should eat of his sin, and that it be turned into the substance of our bodies!" He then called some shepherds, who were near the spot, and emptied all the contents of the wallet into their laps. This is but one instance, which has been preserved almost by chance, of the difficulties under which the convent laboured, and of Stephen's unworldly way of meeting them; the particulars of their daily life in these trying times have been forgotten. Many other facts of the same sort doubtless were handed down and told by the monks in after-times, as this which we have mentioned was related by Master Peter, surnamed Cantor; but the convent traditions have died away, and the chronicles have not recorded more, till we come to the last acts which closed these times of difficulty. It was by what would be called a strange coincidence that the wants of the brethren were at last relieved. The monks called it a miracle wrought by God at Stephen's prayers; and, if the truth be told, we think they were right. It seems to be but scriptural to believe that it happened, as our Lord has promised, "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father."[1] However, the reader shall judge for himself. It was a long dreary season, the time of this downright beggary of Citeaux. It was of no great consequence during Lent; but Lent passed away, and Easter came without alleviation. Still the monks,

[1] John xiv. 12.

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buoyed up by the cheerfulness of their abbot, did not allow their spirit to flag, and only rejoiced the more because they suffered for Christ's sake. At length Pentecost came, and it was found that there was hardly bread in the house to last out the day; nevertheless the brethren prepared for the mass of that great day with ecstasies of joy. They began to chant the solemn service with overflowing hearts, and before the mass was over God rewarded their faith, for succours arrived at the gate of the monastery from an unexpected source. "In these and the like events," says the old monk who relates it, "the man of God, Stephen, weighing within himself how true are those words of Scripture, 'They who fear the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good,' looked with wonder on the bounty and mercy of God on himself and his brethren: more and more did he progress in holy religion, and gloried in the straits of blessed poverty, as in all manner of riches." At length the crisis came; even after the mercy of God on Whitsunday their sufferings were not over, nay, they were at their height, and with them proportionately rose the abbot's faith. He called to him one of the brethren, and, as says the same historian, "speaking to him in the Spirit of God, said to him, 'Thou seest, dearest brother, that we are brought into a great strait by want; nay, well-nigh are our brethren's lives brought into peril by hunger, cold, and other sufferings. Go then to the market of Vezelay, which is very soon coming on, and buy there three waggons, and for each waggon three horses, strong and fit for draught, of which we

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are very much in need for carrying our burdens. And when thou hast laden the waggons with clothes and food and other necessaries, thou shalt bring them with thee, and come back to us in joy and prosperity.'" The poor brother was astonished at the good abbot's command, and it probably crossed him that he was sent on a fool's errand; however, in the spirit of holy obedience he said, "I am ready, my lord and father, to obey thy commands, if thou wilt but give me money to buy these necessaries." The abbot, however, had no such intentions; he felt quite sure in his royal heart that the crisis was come, and that God was now going to help them. As a physician can see deeper into a disease when it is at its height than the bystanders, so can the spiritual man see into God's providence further than other men. He issued, therefore, his orders with a quiet tone, as if the wealth of Peru was at his command. Regardless of the monk's astonishment, he said, "Be it known to thee, brother, that when, in care and anxiety, I searched for means for relieving the wants of our brethren, I found but three pence in the whole house. Take them, if thou wilt. As for the rest, whatever is wanting, the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ will provide it. Go then without fear, for the Lord will send His angel with thee, and will prosper thy way." It is not on record whether the monk took the three pence with him; but it is certain, whether he did or no, that they would not help him much on his mission. However, he started for the town which the abbot had mentioned. When he got there, he went to the house of a friend, and told him of his difficulties.

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Now it happened that a rich neighbour of this friend was on his death-bed, distributing alms to the poor. Thither then the man went, and related in what straits were the monks of Citeaux, whose holiness was well known all over the country; the dying man, on hearing this, sent for the monk, and gave him as much money as would suffice to buy all that the abbot had ordered. Away then he went, and bought his three waggons and nine horses, and all the articles of which the brethren stood in need, and then started merrily for Citeaux. When he got near the monastery he sent word to the abbot that he was coming, and how accompanied. Stephen, in the holy rapture of his heart, assembled the chapter and said, "The God of mercy, the Lord God of mercy, has frankly and bountifully dealt with us. Yea, nobly indeed, generously indeed, hast Thou done, Thou who providest for us, our Shepherd, opening Thine hand and filling our poverty with plenteousness." Then the abbot put on his sacred vestments, and took his pastoral staff in his hand, and with the whole convent in procession, the cross and holy water solemnly borne before him, went to meet the brother and his convoy at the abbey gate. This was the last of the trials which Stephen had to undergo from the failure of the temporalities of his convent. The alms of the faithful flowed in apace, and the cellarer had never again to report an empty granary to the abbot.

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CHAPTER XII

THE MORTALITY AT CITEAUX

ALL however was not over yet; the sorest trial of all was yet to come, far worse than the obstinacy of the monks of Molesme, or the penury of Citeaux. In the year 1111 and 1112, a mortality broke out amongst the brethren; and Stephen saw several of his spiritual children dying off one by one before his eyes. In that year the whole Church was sick, for it was then that Pope Pascal was held in captivity by the Emperor Henry V., and what was worse, gave up the right of granting investitures. Then some bishops spoke harsh words against the sovereign pontiff, that he should be deposed, and the hearts of all men were failing them for fear. But the repentance of Pascal and the firmness of the bishops, and specially of Guido, archbishop of Vienne, saved the Church after a season. It was during this time of confusion for all Christendom, that Citeaux was in mourning. First one brother went, and then another; independently of all other considerations, the loss of men who had borne with him the burden and heat of the day must have been most painful to Stephen. The ties which bound one member of a religious community to another, in death as well as in life, were of the closest

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kind. As in life they had helped one another on in the painful task of crucifying the flesh, so in death they who remained behind on earth helped their brother, who was passing away before them from this world, by their prayers and by their presence. Though monks all their lives through looked death in the face in frequent meditations, yet they did not consider that they could ever be too well prepared for that dreadful moment. It is dreadful, not only because the soul is about to appear before its God, but also because it is an hour of actual conflict with the devil, who then often marshals all his powers for a last effort, and endeavours to shake the faith of the dying man. It was therefore the rule in a convent, that all the brethren should come unto the death-bed of a dying monk to help him against his spiritual enemy. The death of a brother was thus a subject of personal interest to each member of a convent, and in this point of view alone, the successive deaths of his friends must have been a bitter trial to Stephen. As abbot, it was his lot to go, at the head of the brethren, clad in alb, stole, and maniple, and with his pastoral staff in his hand, to the chamber of the dying man, to administer to him extreme unction, and to give him the holy rood to kiss.[1] Again and again during those two painful years he was summoned to the bedside of the brother, to anoint his limbs before his soul passed away from his body. And how often when the last agony was actually come, did the harsh strokes of the wooden mallet[2] which usually called the convent together,

[1] Usus Ord. Cist. i. 93. [2] Tabula.

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resound through the cloister, together with the tolling of the bell, to summon the community to the death-bed of a brother. Then all labour was hastily given up, and even the divine office was broken off, and all went to the dying man's room, repeating aloud the words of the Creed. There they found him lying on ashes sprinkled on the floor in the form of a cross, for that was the posture in which monks died; and then they commended his soul to God with Litanies and the Penitential Psalms. In all these mournful ceremonies, and in all those which took place around the corpse before and at the burial, Stephen as abbot had the chief place; the crosses and the graves silently multiplied before him in the churchyard, and still no novices arrived to fill the empty stalls of those who were dead. The cause of the mortality is not known; it may have been that the marshy soil of the wood had not been properly drained, and that the brethren sunk under the damp air, to which, from their long abstinence, their bodies were peculiarly sensitive. It could not have been the austerity of their life alone, for thousands afterwards followed their steps, and died of a good old age; still it was certain that the world would put it down to that cause, and even the monks of the day would look upon the convent as one cursed by God on account of the fanatical austerities of its inmates. Stephen's cares thus multiplied upon him, and he found no consolation from them except in the time of the divine office. It is recorded of him, that after the evening collation was read, as he entered into the church he used to pause at

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the entrance with his hand pressing on the door. One of the brethren, whom he especially loved, frequently observed this silent gesture as he went into church, and ventured to ask him what it meant. "The holy father," says the Exordium, answered, "I am forced during the day to give free course to many thoughts for the ordering of the house; all these I bid to remain outside the door, and I tell them not to venture in, and to wait till the morrow, when I find them all ready for me after Prime has been said." However the abbot might manage to drive away distressing thoughts during the quiet hours of the night, while the monks were chanting the office in church, yet they recurred with tenfold force during the day, when all the cares of the house came upon him, while his spiritual children were dying about him. At times even his faith all but failed; it crossed his mind that the monks who scoffed at Citeaux might after all be right. The Cistercian manner of life might be displeasing to God, and the frequent deaths of the brethren and the barrenness of the monastery might be a punishment for their presumption in attempting to go beyond what God allowed. Pain in itself is not pleasing to God, and an austere life, unless it be joined by charity to Christ's sufferings, becomes simple pain, for His merits alone convert our sufferings into something sacramental, and make them meritorious in the eyes of God. He might therefore have been leading his poor brethren into the wilderness, and have made them there perish with hunger, and their blood would be required at his hands. These melancholy thoughts

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tormented him, and at last they broke out into words, when with the whole convent he was summoned to attend the death-bed of another brother who was about to follow the many inmates of Citeaux who had already died. All the brethren wondered as he spoke the words, at the calm faith with which he pronounced them, notwithstanding the deep anxiety which they displayed. Thus then in the presence of all he addressed the dying man: "Thou seest, dearest brother, in what great weariness and failing of heart we are, for we have done our best to enter upon the strait and narrow way, which our most blessed father Benedict has proposed in his rule, and yet we are not well assured whether this our way of life is pleasing to God; especially since by all the monks of our neighbourhood we have long been looked upon as devisers of novelty, and as men who kindle scandal and schism. But more than all, I have a most piercing grief which cuts me through to the heart like a spear, and that is, the fewness of our members; for one by one, and day after day, death comes in and hurries us away. Thus I very much fear this our new religious institute will perish with ourselves, for God has not thought fit, up to this time, to associate with us any zealous persons, who love the lowliness of holy poverty, through whom we could hand down to posterity the model of this our rule of life. Wherefore, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, for whose love we have entered upon the strait and narrow way which He proposes to His followers in the Gospel, and by virtue of thine obedience, I

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command thee, at whatever time and in whatever way the grace of the same our Lord may determine, that thou return to us, and give us information touching this our state, as far as His mercy will allow." He spoke these words with a quiet confidence, which looked beyond the grave, so that he appalled the brethren; but the dying monk, with a bright smile lighting up his features, said, "Willingly will I do, my lord and father, what thou commandest, if only I, through the help of thy prayers, shall be allowed to fulfil thy command." The result of this strange dialogue, held on the confines of life and death, was not long in appearing. The brother died, and a few days after he had passed away, the abbot was in the fields working with the brethren. At the usual time he gave the signal for rest, and they laid aside their labour for a while. He himself withdrew a little way from the rest, and with his head buried in his cowl, sat down to pray. As he was in this position, lo! the departed monk appeared before him, surrounded by a blaze of glory, and, as it seemed, rather buoyed up in air than standing on the ground. Stephen asked him how he fared. "Well, good father abbot," he answered, "well is it with me, and well be it with thee, for by thy teaching and care I have merited to obtain that never-ending joy, that unknown peace of God, which passeth all understanding, to gain which I patiently and humbly bore the hard toils of our new order. And now according to thy bidding I have returned to bring news of the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to thee, father, and to thy brethren; you

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bade me certify you of your state, and I say unto you, Lay aside all doubt, and hold it for certain that your life and conversation is holy and pleasing to God. Moreover, the grief at thy want of children to leave behind thee, which gnaws deep into thy heart, shall very soon disappear and turn to joy and triumph; for even yet the children, which thou who wast childless shalt have, shall cry in thine ears, 'The place is too strait for us; give place to us that we may dwell.'[1] For behold, from this time forth, the Lord hath done great things for you, in sending many men unto you, and among them very many of noble birth and learned. Yea, and like bees swarming in haste and flowing over the hive, they shall fly away and spread themselves through many parts of the world; and out of that seed of the Lord, which by His grace has been heaped together here, they shall lay up in the heavenly granaries many sheaves of holy souls, gathered from all parts of the world." On hearing these words the abbot sat rapt in joy at the favour which the Lord had shown to him. Though the heavenly messenger had finished his task, he still lingered and remained visible to Stephen; he had undertaken the mission while on earth, in obedience to his superior, and he must not go without the leave of him who had imposed the task upon him; just as he would have done had he been still a living monk, speaking to his abbot in the little parlour at Citeaux, the glorified spirit waited for the benediction of the father. At length he said to Stephen,

[1] Isaiah xlix. 20.

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"It is now time, lord abbot, that I return to Him who sent me; I pray thee dismiss me in the strength of thy blessing." Stephen shrunk back at the thought of assuming authority over that blessed soul, and at last broke silence: "What is it that thou sayest? Thou hast passed from corruption to incorruption, from vanity to reality, from darkness to light, from death to life; and thou wouldest be blessed by me, who am still groaning under all these miseries? This is against all just right and reason; I ought rather to be blessed by thee; and therefore I pray thee to bless me." But the glorified brother answered: "Not so, father, for the Lord hath given to thee the power of blessing, for He has placed thee on a pinnacle of dignity and of spiritual rule. But me, thy disciple, who by thy healthful doctrine have escaped the stains of the world, it befits to receive thy blessing; nor will I go hence till I have received it." Stephen, though confused and filled with wonder, did not dare to refuse, and lifting his hand, he blessed him, and the happy soul immediately disappeared, leaving him in a transport of wonder at the favour which our Lord had accorded to him. It required a holy daring at first to seek for this mysterious meeting; and none but one who, like Stephen, had from dwelling alone with the Lord in the wilderness and forest, realised the unseen world, could have behaved with calmness and presence of mind when that world was so suddenly opened upon him. A modern philosopher has in mere wantonness sported on the brink of the grave, and made such an agreement as Stephen made with his dying disciple; but

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this boldness arose from infidelity, Stephen's from strong faith, and God punished the infidel for thus tempting Him by leaving him in his error, while He rewarded the holy abbot by a vision.[1] Let no one venture into the world unseen who does not live above the world of sense. Stephen, however, was now rewarded for all his trials, and for his confidence in God, who never forsakes those that trust in Him. He passed at once from the dreadful state of uncertainty which had harassed him, to one of assurance; he had still a long and dreary journey before him, and his crown was not yet won, nay it might still be lost, but at all events, he now felt sure that the path on which he had entered was the very narrow way of the Lord, and not one which he had chosen for himself in self-will.

[1] "Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer, and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement, that the one who happened first to die, should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfilled his promise."—Franklin's Life, vol. i. p. 57.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ARRIVAL OF THE NOVICES

THE vision not only assured Stephen that the Cistercian way of life was acceptable to God, but seemed also to prophesy a speedy increase of numbers in the monastery. Shortly afterwards another event occurred, which the monks interpreted as pointing the same way. Another of the brethren was dying, and on his death-bed he told the abbot that he had dreamed that he saw a vast multitude of men washing their clothes in a fountain of most pure water near the church of Citeaux, and that he heard a voice saying that the name of the fountain was Ænon. This it will be remembered was the name of the place where the austere St. John baptized a multitude of men with the baptism of repentance. The dream then was taken to mean that a multitude would come to Citeaux to wash their stained garments white by penance. Whatever the vision portended, it is certain that the days of mourning for Citeaux were nearly over. Fourteen years of widowhood and barrenness had now passed away since its first foundation, and the fifteenth at last was to bring consolation with it. In the year 1113, the iron hammer which hung at the lowly gate of the monastery sounded, and a large number

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of men entered the cloister, which was hardly ever visited except by some traveller who had been benighted in the forest of Citeaux. Thirty men entered, and coming to Stephen, begged to be admitted as novices. There were amongst them men of middle age, who had shone in the councils of princes, and who had hitherto worn nothing less than the furred mantle or the steel hauberk, which they now came to exchange for the poor cowl of St. Benedict; but the greater part were young men of noble features and deportment, and well might they, for they were of the noblest houses in Burgundy. The whole troop was led by one young man of about twenty-three years of age, and of exceeding beauty.[1] He was rather tall in stature; his neck was long and delicate, and his whole frame very thin, like that of a man in weak health. His hair was of a light colour, and his complexion was fair; but with all its paleness, there was a virgin bloom spread over the thin skin of his cheek. His face was such as had attracted the looks of many high-born ladies;[2] but an angelic purity and a dovelike simplicity shone forth in his eyes, which showed at once the serene chasteness of his soul. This young man was he who was afterwards St. Bernard, and who now came to be the disciple of Stephen, bringing with him four brothers and a number of young noblemen, to fill the empty cells of the novices of Citeaux. Well was it worth toiling

[1] Vid. description of St. Bernard's person by Gaufridus, intimate friend and secretary of the saint, and afterwards abbot of Clairvaux. St. Bern. Vit. i. lib. iii. l. Ed. Ben.

[2] Guil. i. 3.

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all the cold, dreary night of expectation, if such was to be the ultimate result of the fishing. "On that day," says an old monk, "the whole house seemed to have heard the Holy Spirit responding to them in these words, 'Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child, for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife.'" Stephen's expectations were fulfilled to the letter; those regulations which appeared so little likely to attract novices to the convent had brought St. Bernard to its gates. If he had wished to attract the lukewarm and indifferent, he would have made rules of another kind; so true is it that the children of wisdom have a policy of their own, though it be different from that of the world. St. Bernard would have been received with open arms by the monks of any order, nay, he might have created an order for himself; but he preferred finding out the poorest and most hidden monastery in the world, and he found that it was Citeaux, just following the train of reasoning which Stephen knew would be that of a saint-like mind. During the whole time of the desolation of Citeaux, and the internal conflicts of its abbot, the Holy Spirit had been silently leading Bernard, and preserving him from the world, that he might come pure and undefiled to this poor abbey. All that concerns him is of such vital importance to a clear understanding of the work which Stephen was sent upon earth to perform, that the history would be incomplete without an account of the steps which brought him to sit at the feet of our abbot. It was not without a

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painful struggle that he had been brought there, as indeed such is God's way; all great saints have had great trials, for there can be no crucifixion without pain. After the death of his mother, whom he loved tenderly, and to whom God entrusted the forming of his holy mind, he began to think seriously of becoming a monk. Though she died in his youth, yet her sacred memory haunted him even in manhood, and she is even said to have appeared to him to beckon him on to the cloister. The beauty of his person and the corrupt manners of the age, more than once at this critical time put his purity in danger, and though through the grace of the Holy Spirit he walked through the midst of the burning fire even without feeling it, yet he determined to shun a world where wickedness so abounded. His noble birth would have opened his way to the highest dignities of the Church; "but," says his historian, "he deliberated in what way he could most perfectly leave the world, and began to search and to trace out where he could most safely and most purely find rest for his soul under the yoke of Christ. The place which occurred to him in his search was the new plantation of Citeaux, where monastic discipline was brought anew to what it had been at first. There the harvest was plenty, but the labourers were few, on account of the exceeding severity of the life and of its poverty, at a time when the fervour of the monks at their first conversion was hardly at all on the decline." Bernard had no intention of becoming a monk with a mitre and pastoral staff in reversion; his object was that his life should be hid with Christ in

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God, and that his conversation should be in heaven. His first step was however comparatively easy; but much remained to be done before Stephen received his illustrious disciple within the walls of Citeaux. Bernard had gained a victory over the concupiscence of the flesh, and over the pride of high birth; military glory, which was the passion of all his brothers, had no attractions for him, but he had still a weak side on which the tempter could assail him, and this was the pride of intellect. No one can read his writings without seeing the wonderful genius which they show: the same burning eloquence which made him a Christian preacher, if it had been heard in kings' courts would have carried all before it; and the acuteness with which he at once sees deep into metaphysical questions, would have put him at the head of philosophical schools. And was all this to go too? Was his tongue to remain silent in Cistercian dreariness? and his acuteness to be buried with rude and unlearned monks? Yes, so it was; all was to be sacrificed, beauty of form, noble birth, quickness and depth of thought, brilliant eloquence; all were to be nailed to the cross, and he was to become a common labourer, planter, reaper, ploughman, and if so be, hedger and ditcher, wrapped in a coarse cowl, with low-born men for his fellows. We have not yet spoken of one tie, perhaps the strongest of all, and the one which cost the most pain to break, and that was the love of friends and relations. The slightest acquaintance with his life will show the painful struggle of his affections, even when he was abbot of Clairvaux; how he mourns with passionate

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grief over the death of his brother, or still more over the spiritual death of any one whom he knew. Besides his kinsmen, his brilliant and amiable qualities had endeared him to all the flower of the nobles of Burgundy. As soon as the slightest hint was known of Bernard's intention, all these were up in arms: there were his sister Humbeline, a noble and beautiful young lady, his eldest brother Guido, already a married man, and a good soldier of the Duke of Burgundy; Gerard too, the accomplished knight, the enthusiastic soldier, and the prudent leader, beloved for his sweet disposition; and his friend Hugh, the lord of Mâcon, all thinking his project absurd, and himself half-mad. Was he to throw himself at the feet of a fanatic like Stephen, and to bury himself in the corner of an old wood? The thing must not be. Impossible indeed it was with man; but very possible with God. This was one of the wonders of the cross, going on about them, which was in time to shake the whole of France, nay, the whole world. Even they themselves discovered that it was possible; it was a dangerous thing to come across Bernard in his vocation, as they soon found to their cost. However, though they could not move, yet they could cause much pain to Bernard. As he acknowledged afterwards, his steps were well-nigh turned back, and the struggle was most painful. If it had not been for his mother's memory he would have fallen, but her sweet lessons were evermore recurring to his mind and urging him on. One day he was on his way to see his brothers, who were then with the army of the duke besieging the castle of Grancey;

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these thoughts burst so forcibly on his mind that he entered into a church which was open by the wayside, and prayed with a torrent of tears, stretching his hands to heaven, and pouring out his heart like water before the Lord his God. From that hour the purpose of his heart was fixed, and he set his face stedfastly to go to Citeaux. "It was not, however," pursues his historian, "with a deaf ear that he heard the voice of one saying, 'Let him that heareth say, Come.' Truly, from that hour, like a flame which burneth the wood, and a fire consuming the mountains, here and there, first seizing on all about it, then going forth to things farther away, thus the fire which the Lord had sent into the heart of His servant, and had willed that it should burn, first attacks his brothers, all but the youngest, who could not yet go into religion, and who was left to comfort his old father, then his kinsmen, fellows, and friends, and all of whose conversion there could be any hope." First came his uncle Galdricus, a puissant noble and a valiant knight, well known for feats of arms; he quitted his good castle of Touillon, his vassals and his riches, and gave in to the burning words of his nephew. Then the heavenly fire kindled his young brother Bartholomew; his heart gave way easily, for he had not yet been made a knight, having still his spurs to win. Then came Andrew, the fourth brother; it was a sore trial to him to give up the world, for he had just received his knightly sword from the altar, at the hands of a bishop, and had seen his first field; but at last he yielded, for he saw in a vision his sainted mother smiling upon him, and he cried

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out to Bernard, "I see my mother," and at once gave in. But the trial was still sorer when it came to the turn of Guy, the eldest of the brothers; he was a married man, and his young wife loved him tenderly, besides which he had more than one daughter, with whom it was hard indeed to part in the age of their childhood; and even after he had yielded to his brother's persuasions, and had broken through all these ties, a greater difficulty than all remained behind. It was a law of the Church, that neither of a married pair could enter a cloister without the consent of the other; and how was it possible that a delicate and high-born woman could consent to part with her husband and enter into a monastery! Bernard, however, declared to Guy, that if she did not consent, God would smite her with a deadly disease; and so it turned out she soon after fell ill, and "finding," says William of St. Thierry, "that it was hard for her to kick against the pricks, she sent for Bernard" and gave her consent. None, however, clung to the world with such deep-rooted affection as Gerard, the second brother: as we said before, he was a frank and high-spirited soldier, yet, withal, sage in counsel, and he had won all about him by his kind-heartedness. The world was all open before him; his talents were sure to raise him to high rank and honour; and he was ardently fond of feats of chivalrous daring. To him the conduct of his brothers seemed to be mere folly, and he abruptly repelled Bernard's advice. But the fire of charity was still more powerful than the young knight's ardour; "I know, I know," said Bernard, "that pain alone will give wisdom to thine

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ears," and laying his hands upon Gerard's side, he continued, "A day will come, and that soon, when a lance, piercing this side, will tear a way to thy heart for this counsel of thy salvation which thou dost despise; and thou shalt be in fear, but shalt not die." A few days after this, Gerard had in the heat of the battle charged into the midst of the enemy; there he was unhorsed, wounded with a lance in the very place where Bernard had laid his finger, and dragged along the ground. His brother's words rose before him, and he cried out, "I am a monk, a monk of Citeaux." Little did Stephen think, in the midst of his perplexities, that the name of his poor monastery had been heard in the thick of a deadly fight, and that a nobleman had chosen that strange place to make his profession, with swords pointed at his breast, and lances and pennons flying about him. Notwithstanding Gerard's exclamation, he was taken captive, and lodged in a dungeon within the castle of his enemies; he, however, soon after made his escape from prison in a way which seemed perfectly miraculous, and joined his brother Bernard. Now the whole band of brothers had been won over; but Bernard was not yet satisfied; the fields were white for the harvest, and he went about collecting his sheaves that he might lay them all up in the garners of Citeaux. Hugh, the lord of Mâcon, was also to be brought to Stephen's feet; the young nobles drew together into knots in self-defence, whenever Bernard passed by, for fear of being carried away by his powerful word; mothers hid their sons, lest in the flower of youth they should hide

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themselves in a cloister. All however was in vain; "as many," says the abbot of St. Thierry, "as were so pre-ordained by the grace of God working in them, and the word of His strength, and through the prayer and earnestness of His servant, first hesitated, then were pierced to the heart; one after another they believed and gave in." Thirty men of the most noble blood in Burgundy were thus collected together; as many of them were married men, their wives also had to give up the world; all these arrangements required time, and for six months they put off their conversion till their affairs could be arranged. The females retired to the Benedictine monastery of Juilly, whence afterwards it is supposed that many were transferred to the first Cistercian nunnery, the abbey of Tard, near Dijon. When the time for proceeding to Citeaux was come, Bernard and his four brothers went to the castle of Fountains, which was their family place, to take leave of their father and sister. This was their last glimpse of the world; they then left all and followed Christ. The little Nivard was playing about with other boys as they passed. Guy, the eldest brother, stopped his childish glee for a moment, to tell him that all the broad lands of Fountains, and many a fair portion of the earth, were to be for him. "What," said the boy, "earth for me, heaven for you! the bargain is not a fair one." Probably he knew not then what he said, but as soon as he could he followed his brothers. Thus the old father was left to sit alone in his deserted halls with his daughter Humbeline; he was now a

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barren trunk, with the choice boughs lopped off; his noble line was to come to an end, and when he dropped into the grave, the castle of his fathers was to pass into the hands of strangers.

Now, it may be asked, that Stephen has housed his thirty novices, what has he or any one else gained by it? what equivalent is gained for all these domestic ties rudely rent, for all these bleeding hearts torn asunder, and carrying their wounds unhealed into the cloister? Would not rustics suit Stephen's purpose well, if he would cultivate a marsh in an old wood, without desolating the hearths of the noblest houses of Burgundy? Human feeling revolts when high nobles, with their steel helmets, shining hauberks, and painted surcoats, are levelled with the commonest tillers of the soil; and even feelings of pity arise when high-born dames, clad in minever, and blazing with jewels, cast all aside for the rough sackcloth and the poor serge of St. Benedict; what shall we say, when young mothers quit their husbands and their families to bury themselves in a cloister? There are here no painted windows and golden candlesticks, with chasubles of white and gold to help out the illusion; feeling and imagination, all are shocked alike, and every faculty of the natural man is jarred at once at the thought. Such words might have been spoken even in Stephen's time, but "Wisdom is justified of her children." One word suffices to silence all these murmurers: Ecce Homo, Behold the Man. The wonders of the incarnation are an answer to all cavils. Why, it may as well be asked, did our blessed Lord choose

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to be a poor man, instead of being clothed in purple and fine linen? why was His mother a poor virgin? why was He born in an inn, and laid in a manger? why did He leave His blessed mother, and almost repulse her, when she would speak to Him? why was that mother's soul pierced with agony at the sufferings of her divine Son? why, when one drop of His precious blood would have healed the whole creation, did He pour it all out for us? in a word, why, when He might have died (if it be not wrong to say so) what the world calls a glorious death, did He choose out the most shameful, besides heaping to Himself every form of insult, and pain of body and soul? He did all this to show us that suffering was now to be the natural state of the new man, just as pleasure is the natural state of the old. Suffering and humiliation are the proper weapons of the Christian, precisely in the same way that independence, unbounded dominion and power, are the instruments of the greatness of the world. No one can see how all this acts to bring about the final triumph of good over evil; it requires faith, but so does the spectacle of our blessed Lord naked on the cross, with St. Mary and St. John weeping on each side. After casting our eyes on the holy rood, does it never occur to us to wonder how it can be possible to be saved in the midst of the endearments of a family, and the joys of domestic life? God forbid that any one should deny the possibility! but does it not at first sight require proof that heaven can be won by a life spent in this quiet way. Again, let us consider

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the dreadful nature of sin, even of what are called the least sins, and would not any one wish to cast in his lot with Stephen, and wash them away by continual penance? Now if what has been said is not enough to reconcile the reader's mind to their leaving their father in a body, which looks like quitting a positive duty, it should be considered that they believed themselves to be acting under the special direction of God. Miracles were really wrought to beckon them on; at least they were firmly convinced of the truth of those miracles, which is enough for our purpose, and they would have disobeyed what they conceived to be God's guidance, if they had remained in the world. Miracles, indeed, cannot be pleaded to the reversing of commands of the Decalogue; but persons leave their parents for causes which do not involve religion at all, as to follow some profession in a distant quarter of the globe, or to marry; and we may surely excuse St. Bernard and his brothers for conduct which was so amply justified by the event. One word more: every one will allow that he who is continually meditating on heaven and heavenly things, and ever has his conversation in heaven, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, is more perfect than he who is always thinking on worldly affairs. Let no one say that this perfection is ideal, for it is a mere fact that it has been attained. Stephen and Bernard, and ten thousand other saints, have won this perfection, and it may be and is won now, for the Church verily is not dead, nor have the gates of hell prevailed against her. All cannot attain to such a high state on

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earth, for it is not the vocation of all. It was, however, plainly God's will that all Bernard's convertites should be so called, from the fact of their having attained to that state of perfection. They were happy, for to them it was given not to fear those words of our Lord, "Whosoever loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me;" or again, that terrible saying, spoken to one who asked to go and bury his father, "Let the dead bury their dead." Moreover, they knew that blessing, "Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." Bernard did receive back both father and sister, for his father died in his arms a monk at Clairvaux, and his sister also in time retired to a cloister. Let any one read St. Bernard's sermons on the Song of Solomon, and he will not doubt that monks have joys of their own, which none but those who have felt them can comprehend.

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CHAPTER XIV

THE WORLD EDIFIED BY THE BRETHREN OF CITEAUX

THE times of refreshing from the Lord had indeed come to the forlorn monastery; the unheard-of conversion of so many noble youths filled the world with wonder. It was a proof that the Church was not only not dead, but not even asleep. At the beginning of the eleventh century, the heart of Christendom seemed to have failed, and all men thought that the world was coming to an end; throughout the whole of the century the Church was either preparing for, or actually engaged in a deadly struggle with the civil power, and in that miserable confusion men seemed to have lost their landmarks, and not to know what was to come of all the perplexity which they saw about them. Meanwhile, the Church herself felt the deteriorating effects of the struggle; men saw the strange spectacle of courtier-bishops, acting as the ministers of kings, and behaving in all respects like the wild nobles, from whom they were only distinguished by wearing a mitre and carrying a crozier. Let any one think how bishops behaved in the contest between St. Anselm and the king, or again in Germany, how many of them sided with the emperor against the pope, and he will see how the

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feudal system had worked upon the Church. In the beginning of the twelfth century, the struggle seemed as doubtful as ever, when the emperor Henry V., like a loving son of the Church that he was, took Pope Pascal prisoner in the very Basilica of St. Peter, and would not let him go till he had given him a blessing; that is, till he had given up the question of investiture, and acknowledged himself vanquished by crowning his tyrant.[1] This, however, was the last act of the great struggle; three years after Bernard's entrance into Citeaux, the Church resumed her former attitude, when, in the Lateran Council, the pope acknowledged his error, and allowed the bishops to excommunicate the emperor. The time of the triumph of the Church was at hand; but though she might conquer the powers of the world, how was she to expel luxury from her own bosom? Enough has been said in these pages to show that the cloister itself was deeply infected by a spirit of worldly pomp. What was worst of all, even Cluny, the nurse of holy prelates and of great popes, was degenerating; in St. Hugh's time, its vast riches had been used in the service of God, but now that he was dead, it became evident in how precarious a situation is a rich monastery. One bad abbot is enough to spoil the whole, and St. Hugh's successor, Pontius, was utterly unequal to the task of governing this vast abbey. He was a young, ambitious man, high in favour with popes, emperors, and all great men, the go-between of high

[1] Baronius, in Ann. 1111.

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personages in important matters, and withal specially neglectful of the business of the monastery. For three years he went on well enough, but just about the time of the rising prosperity of Citeaux, he began to vex the monks by his haughty conduct. To finish a melancholy story, after ten years of bickering he threw up his abbey in disgust. After various acts of turbulence, this accomplished and high-spirited man, who might have been one of the greatest personages of his day, died in a prison excommunicated. Out of reverence for Cluny, he was allowed to be buried in consecrated ground, and long afterwards his tomb was shown in the church, on which lay his effigy, represented with a cord round his hands and feet. His mismanagement ruined Cluny for a time, and threw the whole of its dependent priories into disorder. When the monastic state was thus on the wane, how could any improvement be expected in the bishops, who were mostly supplied from the monks? The Church might shake off the feudal yoke, but how was the leprosy of pomp and luxury to be shaken out of her own bosom, if her own rulers were tainted? At this juncture the voice of one crying in the wilderness is heard, calling to repentance those who dwelt in king's houses, clothed in soft raiment. Stephen's burning love of poverty astonished the world, especially when God set His seal upon His servant's work, by bringing to his feet such a disciple as Bernard, with a train of noble followers. It was a movement in favour of holy poverty, which vibrated over the whole of Christendom. Robert, Alberic, and Stephen had thus created a new idea

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in the Church; not that there ever were wanting men who would be poor for Christ's sake, but the Cistercian monk in his white habit, and his train of lay-brethren working for him, that he might have time for contemplation, is a personage the precise likeness of whom has never been seen brought out in a regular system before. The institution of lay-brethren had always existed, as we have said before, but it was more systematised in the Cistercians, and had a more distinct object. The lay-brethren took charge of the granges, which were often at some little distance from the monastery. The choir brethren were thus enabled always to remain within the cloister, and had an uninterrupted time for spiritual reading and prayer. Meditation had thus a marked place in the system; and it is more observable, because the length and intricacy of the splendid services of Cluny took up a very great part of the time of the monks. The result of this system was what may be called a new school of ascetic writers, of whom St. Bernard is the chief, followed by Gilbert of Hoyland, abbot of Swineshed in England, Ælred of Rievaux, and William of St. Thierry. The science of the interior man thus began to be more especially developed by the Cistercian reform. Again, Stephen and his disciples were destined to exercise a more direct influence on the world than the old Benedictines; from the fact of their being a reform in the particular direction of a revival of poverty, they occupied, so to speak, a more militant position than the monks before them. They found themselves at once opposed not only to monasteries, but to all luxurious pre-

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lates, and secular churchmen who were the favourites of kings, and so, indirectly, to kings. We shall soon see that all the reforms in the Church naturally connected themselves with Citeaux as their centre.

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CHAPTER XV

A DAY AT CITEAUX

ST. ROBERT and St. Alberic had both a share in the establishment of the new monastery; it was Stephen, however, exclusively, who framed the order of the Cistercians. Before his time it was only a single convent, but under him it grew into the head of a vast monastic federacy extending through every country in Europe. He was the author of the internal arrangement of this large body, and let no one suppose that legislating for many thousands of monks is at all an easier task than settling the constitution of an equal number of citizens. Before, however, proceeding to consider Citeaux in this dignified capacity as the queen and mother of an order, it will be well to go through the daily exercises of a Cistercian convent, that the reader may know what it is that is growing up before him. Suppose the monks all lying on their beds of straw, ranged in order along the dormitory, the abbot in the midst. Each of them lay full dressed, with his cowl drawn over his head, with his cuculla and tunic, and even with stockings on his feet.[1] His scapular alone was dispensed with. Doubtless no one complained of heat, for the bed-clothes were

[1] Us. Cist. 82.

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scanty, consisting of a rough woollen cloth between their limbs and the straw, and a sort of woollen rug over them.[1] The long dormitory had no fire, and currents of air had full room to play under the unceiled roof, left in the native rudeness of its beams. A lamp lighted up the apartment, and burned all night long. At the proper hour the clock awoke the sacristan, who slept, not in the dormitory, but near the church. He was the time-keeper of the whole community, and regulated the clock, which seems to have been something of an alarum,[2] for he used to set it at the right hour overnight. His was an important charge, for he had to calculate the time, and if he was more wakeful than usual, or if his clock went wrong, the whole convent was robbed of a part of its scanty rest, and the last lesson had to be lengthened that the hour of lauds might come right again. The time for rising varied with these strict observers of the ancient rule. St. Benedict commands that his monks should get up at the eighth hour of the night during the winter. In his time, however, the length of the hours varied in summer and winter. Day and night were each divided into twelve hours, but as the day dawns earlier in some parts of the year than in others, the twelve hours of night would then be distributed over a less space of time at one period than at another, and would therefore be shorter. The eighth hour of the night would thus, though always two hours after midnight, be sometimes closer to it than at others. It, however,

[1] Calmet on c. 55 of St. Ben. Reg. [2] Us. Cist. 114.

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always fell about two o'clock, according to our mode of reckoning.[1] In summer the hour of matins was so fixed that they should be over a short time before lauds, which were always at daybreak. The sacristan, as soon as he was up, trimmed the church lamp and that of the dormitory, and rang the great bell; in a moment the whole of this little world was alive; the sole things which a minute ago looked as if they were watching were the two solitary lamps burning all night long, one in the dormitory, the other in the church, as if they were ready trimmed with oil for the coming of the Lord; but now every eye is awake, and every hand is making the sign of the cross. Most men find it hard to leave even a bed of straw, and the seven hours in winter and six in summer were but just enough for bodies wearied out with hard work, and always hungering; doubtless the poor novice often stretched himself before the tones of the bell which had broken his slumbers fully roused him to consciousness; but starting from bed, and putting himself at once into the presence of his Lord, was but the work of a moment for the older monk. The prayer which they were to say in rising is not prescribed in the rule; it is probable, however, that after crossing themselves in the name of the Holy Trinity, they repeated the psalm, *Deus in adjutorium meum intende*,[2] and then walked towards the church. One by one these white figures glided along noiselessly through the cloister, keeping modestly close to the walls, and leaving the middle space free

[1] Bona, Div. Psal. c. iv. 3.
[2] Martenne, de Antiq. Mon. Rit. lib. i. 1. 27.

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where none but the abbot walked.[1] Their cowls were drawn over their heads, which were slightly bent down; their eyes were fixed on the ground, and their hands hung down motionless by their sides, wrapt in the sleeves of the cuculla. The old Cistercian church, after the model of which was built even the stately church which afterwards contained all the brethren in the flourishing times of Citeaux,[2] was remarkable in its arrangement. It was intended for monks alone; few entered it but those guests who happened to come to the abbey, and they were not always allowed to be present.[3] It was divided into four parts; at the upper end was the high altar, standing apart from the wall; the sole object which Cistercian simplicity allowed upon it was a crucifix of painted wood; and over it was suspended a pix, in which the Holy Sacrament was reserved, with great honour, in a linen cloth,[4] with a lamp burning before it day and night.[5] There do not appear to have been even candlesticks upon the altar, though two large lights burned during the time of mass immediately before it.[6] The part in front of this most sacred place was called the

[1] Rit. Cist. 1. 5.
[2] Rit. Cist. 1. 3.
[3] Us. Cist. 17. 21. 55.
[4] Ib. 21.
[5] V. c. 82, in the collection of statutes of the general chapters before his time, made by Stephen's successor. The words "et potest" show that it was in a place not accessible to all. The lamp is mentioned again in a later collection of statutes, Nom. p. 277. Those who know the reverence of St. Stephen's age for the Holy Sacrament will be at no loss to know where the lamp was placed, though it is not expressly mentioned. For a contemporary instance of a light before the high altar, vid. Matt. Par. Vit. Pauli Abb. Sti Alb.
[6] Us. Cist. 55.

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presbyterium, and there the priest, deacon, and sub-deacon sat in chairs placed for them, when the holy sacrifice was to be celebrated. Next came the choir itself, where the brethren sat in simple stalls, ranged on each side of the church. In front of the stalls of the monks were the novices, kneeling on the pavement,[1] and sitting on low seats. The stall of the abbot was on the right hand, in the lower part of the choir, and the prior's place was on the opposite side; just where the head of a college and his deputy sit in one of our own collegiate chapels. Beyond this was the retro-chorus, which was not the Lady Chapel, but was at the other end of the church, nearest the nave, and was the place marked out for those in weak health, but still well enough to leave the infirmary.[2] Last of all came the nave, which was smaller than the rest of the church,[3] unlike the long and stately naves of our cathedral churches. Into this church, called by the modest name of oratory, the first fathers of Citeaux entered nightly to sing the praises of God, and to pray for the world which was lying asleep beyond the borders of their forest. It had many separate entrances, by which different portions of the convent flocked in with a quick step to rouse themselves from sleep, but all in perfect silence; by one side entrance the brethren came in between the presbytery and the stalls,[4] while the abbot and prior, and those about him, entered at the lower end; there was also a door leading into the

[1] Fosbrooke, Monachism, p. 203.
[2] Us. Cist. 101. Rit. Cist. 1. 3.
[3] Voy. Lit. i. 224.
[4] Us. Cist. 68. Rit. Cist. 1. 5.

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cloister,[1] through which processions passed. Each brother as he came in threw back his cowl, and bowed to each altar that he passed, and then to the high altar. They then, except on Sundays and some feast days, knelt in their stalls with their hands clasped upon their breasts, and their feet close together, and said the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. In this position they remained till the *Deus in adjutorium* had been said, when they rose and remained standing during the rest of the service, except where it was otherwise especially marked. Matins lasted for about two hours, during which they chanted psalms, interspersed with anthems; the glimmering light of the lamp was not intended to do more than pierce through the gloom of the church, for the greater part of the service was recited by heart, and a candle was placed just in that part where the lesson was to be read;[2] if it were not that their lips moved, they might have been taken for so many white statues, for their arms were placed motionless upon their bosoms in the form of a cross,[3] and every movement was regulated so as to be as tranquil as possible.[4] The sweet chanting of the early Cistercians struck some of their contemporaries as something supernatural. "With such solemnity and devotion do they celebrate the divine office," says Stephen of Tournay, "that you might fancy that angels' voices were heard in their concert; by their psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, they draw men to praise God, and they imitate the angels."[5] Yet this effect was

[1] Us. Cist. 7. 21. [2] Us. Cist. 68. [3] Rit. Cist. 1. 8.
[4] Ib. 1. 6. [5] Bona de Div. Psal. 18. 5.

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simply produced by common Gregorian chants, sung in unison; as in the other parts of divine worship, the Cistercians were reformers in church music. They sent, in their simplicity, all the way to Metz to procure the antiphonary of that church, as being the most likely to be pure from innovation, probably because Amalarius, a deacon of Metz, was a celebrated liturgical writer in the time of the son of Charlemagne; but they soon found that many ages had passed over the Church since the time of the great emperor of the West. The book was very defective, and was filled with innovations, and they immediately set about correcting it.[1] Monastic music had suffered, as well as other portions of St. Benedict's rule; and our Cistercians speak with contempt of womanish counter-tenor voices,[2] which they inexorably banished from their churches. Their chanting was especially suited for contemplation; they dwelt on each syllable, and sucked in the honeyed sense of the psalms as they pronounced the words. It is not wonderful if the men of that time believed that devils trembled, and angels noted down in letters of gold[3] the words which dropped from their lips, as these grave and masculine voices chanted through the darkness of the night the triumph of good over evil, and the glories of the Lord and of His Church. Few, indeed, are worthy to chant the Psalms: who can repeat, for instance, the 119th Psalm as he should? but Stephen and his brethren might pronounce

[1] Tract. de Cantu. in St. Bernard's works.
[2] St. Bern. in Cant. 47, Inst. Cap. Gen. 71, ap. Nomasticon.
[3] Exord. Mag. 2. 3.

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those burning words of the Spirit without shame, for they had indeed given up the world. "Ignitum eloquium tuum vehementer, et servus dilexit illud."

After matins were over they never returned to sleep, but were permitted either to pray in the church, or to sit in the cloister. In summer, when the day dawned upon the convent almost as soon as matins were over, the time thus allowed was very short, for lauds followed close on the first glimmer of morning light. In winter there was a considerable interval between lauds and matins, and it was during this part of the day that the monk was left most to himself. This was the time allotted to mental prayer, and many a monk might then be seen kneeling in his stall, occupied in that meditation which, according to St. Bernard, "gathers itself up into itself, and by divine help, separates itself from earthly things, to contemplate God."[1] It was one of the rules of the order that they were not to prostrate themselves full length on the ground in church,[2] but should keep their souls in quiet before God, without violent action. Others again remained in the cloister, which, with all its strictness and tranquillity, was a busy scene. Let no one think of the cloister as it is now, in a state of desertion, about our cathedrals, cold and comfortless, with all the glass taken out of its windows; its religious silence has given place to the silence of the churchyard. It was formerly the very paradise of the monk, from which all the rest

[1] De Con. 5. 2. [2] Inst. Cap. Gen. 86.

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of the convent was named;[1] it shut him out from the world "with its royal rampart of discipline," and was an image of the rest of heaven. It was the passage by which every part of the convent buildings was connected, and around which on Palm Sunday they walked in procession, with green palms in their hands. At the east end of the church, at right angles with it, was the dormitory; opposite the church was the refectory, and adjoining the church was the chapter-house;[2] in the centre was a cross. After matins, then, those of the brethren who were not in the church were all together in the cloister. In one part was the cantor marking out the lessons, and hearing some brother repeat them in a low suppressed tone; or else a novice would be learning to recite the psalter by heart. In another part, ranged on seats, the brethren would sit in unbroken silence reading, with their cowls so disposed about their heads that it might be seen that they were not asleep. It was here that St. Bernard gained his wonderful knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, meditating upon them before the morning light. In another corner of the cloister, the boys of the monastery would be at school, under the master of the novices. The

[1] St. Bern. Serm. de Div. 42.

[2] Calmet, Règle de St. Benoît, ch. 66. The order observed in processions falls in with Calmet's opinion, v. Us. Cist. 17. It is there implied that the deacon, who went first, had at the last station of the procession his face to the east and his back to the brethren. The whole convent, therefore, after having made the round of the cloister, and finished at the point where they began, looked to the east; they must, therefore, at first starting from the church, have moved towards the east. And this fixes the position of their first station, which is known to have been the dormitory, at the east end of the church.

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library from which the monks took the books in which they read, was between the church and the chapter-house, and was under the care of the sacristan: and let no one despise the library of a Cistercian convent. St. Augustine seems to have been a favourite author with them,[1] and Citeaux itself had no lack of expositions of Scripture by the Fathers.[2] Shall we not be surprised to find a copy of the Koran in the armarium of Clairvaux? and yet there it was, the gift of Peter the Venerable, who had ordered it to be translated carefully.[3] Citeaux had its scriptorium as well as its library, where manuscripts were copied by the brethren. It is true that the antiquary would despise the handiwork of the Cistercians, for no illuminated figures of saints, elaborate capital letters, or flowers in arabesque creeping up the margin, were allowed; jewelled covers and gold clasps were also forbidden;[4] but instead of this, religious silence was strictly observed, and the scriptorium was a place for meditation as much as the cloister itself.[5] Their labours did not consist in simply copying the manuscripts; they took pains to discover various readings, and to compare editions. It might have been supposed that the cold winds of the forest, with the burning sun and drenching rain, must have fairly bleached out of Stephen's mind all the learning which he had gathered in the schools of Paris. But he left behind him a work which

[1] Mabillon de Mon. Stud. App. Art. 24. St. Bern. de Bapt.
[2] St. Bern. Vit. Guillel. i. 24. ap. Ben.
[3] Pet. Ven. Ep. 4. 17. [4] Inst. Cap. Gen. 13. 81.
[5] Inst. Cap. Gen. 87.

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proved that he kept under his Cistercian habit the same heart which had urged him to leave his old cloister of Sherborne to study in Scotland and in France. A manuscript edition of the Bible, written under the eye of our abbot himself, was preserved with great reverence at Citeaux up to the time of the French Revolution. Not content with consulting Latin manuscripts, he even had recourse to the Rabbins, in order to settle the readings of the Old Testament. In this way there could never be a lack of books for the brethren to read in the cloister, since there was at home a power of multiplying them as long as there were friendly monasteries to lend them new manuscripts to copy, when the original stock of the library had failed.

As the Cistercians followed the natural divisions of the day, the hours in winter and in summer differed considerably, as has been already mentioned; again, the ecclesiastical divisions of the year altered their mode of living to a great degree. From Easter to Holy Cross day—that is the 14th of September—they broke their fast after sext, and had a second meal after vespers, except on Wednesdays and Fridays, which were fast days: during the rest of the year, from Holy Cross day to Easter, they never had but one meal a day, and that after nones, up to Ash Wednesday, but during Lent not till after vespers. It will be necessary, therefore, to give a sketch of their mode of living, first in summer and then in winter. Lauds, as has been said before, followed matins very soon in summer, after which an interval was allowed, during which the brethren might go to the dormitory to wash

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themselves, and change portions of the dress in which they had slept. As soon as the day had fully dawned, prime was sung, and then they went into the chapter. If ever there was a scene revolting to human pride, it was the chapter; more than any other part of the monastic life, it shows that a convent was not a place where men walked about in clothes of a peculiar cut, and spent their time in formal actions, but a school of humiliation, where the very last roots of self-love were plucked up, and the charity of the Gospel planted in its stead. Humility was the very soul of the cloister, and a great part of St. Benedict's rule is taken up with an analysis of the twelve degrees of humility, which form the steps of a Jacob's ladder, leading up to perfect love, which casteth out fear.[1] Our Cistercians had studied this part of the rule well, and St. Bernard's earliest work is a sort of comment upon it. The chapter-house was the place where this mingled humility and love was most of all exercised. Around it were ranged seats, one above another; the novices sitting on the lowest row, or rather on the footstools attached to the seats; in the midst was the abbot's chair.[2] The chapter opened with the martyrology, and with those parts of the service now attached to the office of prime. Then followed the commemoration of the faithful departed, and in some cases a sermon; after which a portion of St. Benedict's rule was read. Then each brother who had in the slightest way transgressed the rule, came forward and confessed it

[1] Reg. c. 7. [2] Rit. Cist. 3. 8.

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aloud before the whole convent. He rose from his seat and threw back his cowl that all might see his face, then he muffled up his face and head, and threw himself full length on the low stool of the lectern, without speaking a word. At length the abbot spoke, and asked him, "What sayest thou?" The brother answered, "Meâ culpâ," "It was by my fault"; then he was bidden to rise in the name of the Lord, and he again uncovered his features, and confessed his faults, and after receiving a penance, if it were necessary, he went back to his seat at the bidding of his superior. When all had confessed their own sins, then a still more extraordinary scene followed: each monk accused his brother if he had seen or heard anything amiss in him. He rose, and mentioning his name, said, "Our dear brother has committed such a fault." Happy they who could thus bear to hear their faults proclaimed in the face of day, without being angry. The angels are blessed because they cannot sin; next to them in happiness are those who are not wrathful when rebuked. But what shall we say to the punishments for greater offences against the rule? The monk who had grievously offended stripped himself to his waist, and on his knees received the discipline at the hands of a brother in the face of the convent. Blessed again are they who thus are willing to suffer shame on earth, if by any means they may escape shame at the dreadful day of judgment. It was not, however, only in public that they confessed their sins; any mortal sins against the rule were to be confessed over again to a priest for the benefit of absolution,

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though they had already been proclaimed in the chapter; and during all the intervals of work, before they had broken their fast, the brethren might confess their sins in private in the chapter. An instance is incidentally related in which a novice, on entering into Clairvaux, made a general confession of the sins of his whole life,[1] and this was probably a common practice, though not enjoined by the rule; at least it had become common at the end of the century in which Stephen lived.[2] After the chapter was over, the brethren went out to manual labour; this was one of the peculiarities which distinguished Citeaux from Cluny. Their labour was good hard work by which they gained their livelihood, and with the help of their lay-brethren supported themselves, and gave abundant alms to the poor. Few things are more remarkable than this mixture of all the details of spades and forks, ploughing, haymaking, and reaping, with the meditation and constant prayer of the Cistercians. During the harvest-time the daily mass was, if the abbot so willed, attended only by the sick and all who were too weak to work, for the whole convent was in the fields. And when mass was said, the priest put off chasuble and stole, and with his assistants followed the brethren who had gone before to work.[3] St. Bernard put off the finishing of one of his wonderful sermons on the Canticles, because the brethren must go to the work which

[1] Vit. St. Bern. 7. 22.

[2] Vid. Adam, abbot of a Cistercian monastery, quoted by Calmet on c. 58 of the Rule.

[3] Us. Cist. 84.

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their rule and their poverty required.[1] It was a peculiarity of the Cistercians, that they did not sing psalms, but meditated while they worked; again, no one was allowed to take a book with him into the fields. This last regulation was probably made by Stephen himself, for it is recorded of St. Alberic that he took the psalter with him when he worked. Field-work was not, however, it may be said by the way, the only labour of the Cistercian; he took his turn to be cook, which office went the round of the convent, and was changed weekly. Again, he might be cellarer, infirmarian, master of the novices, or porter, with a variety of other offices, which would give him employment enough. The cellarer, especially, was an officer of considerable dignity in the community; he had the whole of the victualling department under his care; cooks and lay-brethren especially referred to him in all matters which came under his jurisdiction, and he had to weigh out the proper quantity of food for each of the monks. Prudence and experience were not, therefore, qualities thrown away in a convent, which, as has been said, was a little world in itself, and even, in its way, a busy world. But each servile occupation was hallowed by obedience and religious silence, in which the Lord spoke to the heart.

The brethren left the fields as soon as the first stroke of the bell for tierce was heard. The early Benedictines said tierce in the fields, and continued working till near ten o'clock, thus giving two hours and a half to manual labour. The reason why the

[1] Serm. i.

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Cistercians worked for a shorter time was, because mass followed immediately upon tierce. In St. Benedict's time there was no daily mass,[1] but since then a change had taken place in the discipline of the Church, and the holy sacrifice was offered up every day at Citeaux. At this mass any one might communicate who had not communicated on the Sunday, which was the day on which the whole convent received the Body and Blood of our most blessed Lord, who was at that time given to the faithful under both kinds. After the celebration of these adorable mysteries, the brethren again retired into the cloister to read, or went into the church for meditation. At about half-past eleven the bell rang for sext, after which the convent assembled in the refectory, for the first and principal meal of the day, except on the Wednesdays and Fridays out of the Paschal time, on which days, as has been said before, they had only one meal, and that after nones. The Cistercian dinner, or breakfast as it might be called, needed the seasoning of early rising and hard labour to make it palatable. It consisted of a pound of the coarsest bread (one-third of which was reserved for supper if there was one), and two dishes of different sorts of vegetables boiled without grease. Their drink was the sour wine of the country, well diluted with water, or else thin beer[2] or a decoction of herbs called sapa,[3] which seems to have been more like vegetable soup than any other beverage. Even fish and eggs, which

[1] Martenne, de Ant. Mon. Rit. 2–4.
[2] Sicera is mentioned, Us. Cis. 117.
[3] Sapa occurs Vit. St. Bern. 2. 1.

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had always been considered to be legitimate diet for monks, were excluded. Their contemporaries wondered at their austerity; how weak and delicate bodies, worn out by hard labour and by night-watching, could possibly subsist on such coarse food: but St. Bernard tells us what made it palatable. "Thou fearest watchings, fasts, and manual labour," he says to a runaway Cistercian, "but these are light to one who thinks on the eternal fire. The remembrance of the outer darkness takes away all horror from solitude. Think on the strict sifting of thine idle words which is to come, and then silence will not be so very unpleasing. Place before thine eyes the everlasting weeping and gnashing of teeth, and the mat or the down pillow will be the same to thee." And yet theirs was not a service of gloom or fear. Christ rewarded the holy boldness of these noble athletes, who thus afflicted their bodies for His sake, by filling their souls with the joys of devotion. "Oh that by God's mercy," says St. Bernard to one whom he was persuading to quit the world, "I could have thee as my fellow in that school where Jesus is the Master! Oh that I could place thy bosom, if it were but once pure, in the place where it might be a vase to catch that unction which teacheth us of all things!—Thinkest thou not that thou wouldest suck honey from the rock, and oil from the rugged stone?" Every action was sanctified to the monks; even at their meals a strict silence was observed, and one of the brethren read aloud some religious book during the time that they were in the refectory. After it was over, according to the custom of hot climates, and

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in order to make up for the shortness of the night in summer, they went into the dormitory to sleep. After about an hour's rest the bell rang to rouse them up, and in the interval between nones, they washed themselves, and either sat in the cloister or repaired to the church. Nones were said at half-past two, after which they were allowed a draught of water in the refectory before they returned to manual labour, which lasted till half-past five, when they sang vespers.[1] The vesper-hour was especially the monk's season of quiet, when the day was over with all its work, and the shades of evening were closing about him. St. Bernard interprets the evening in Scripture to mean the time of quiet,[2] and Cistercian writers, even in late times, are fond of collecting together all the mystical import of the time of vespers.[3] They went into the refectory after returning from their work, and partook of a slight repast, consisting of the remainder of their pound of bread, with a few raw fruits, such as radishes, lettuces, or apples furnished by the abbey gardens.

Before we close the day with compline, it will be necessary to mark the difference between the summer and winter rule. Their seasons followed the ecclesiastical division of the year; summer was reckoned from Easter to the middle of September, and the rest of the year was called winter. The Church in winter sits in expectation of her Lord's coming, and the Cistercians redoubled their austerities during this long period of the gloom of the

[1] Calmet, c. 48. [2] In Cant. Serm. 57.
[3] Bona de Div. Psal. 10.

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year. They arose in all the cold and snow of winter, in the dark and dreary night, to watch for the coming of the Lord, and to pray for the world which was lying without in the darkness and shadow of death. As the world is engaged in turning day into night, in order to have its fill of pleasure, so they multiplied time for devotion by stealing from the hours when men are asleep. On Christmas night a fire burned merrily in the calefactory, and all with glad hearts might cluster around it; but at other times no fire is mentioned during the night hours, and it was in cold and hunger that they waited for the nativity of the Lord, and thought upon the cold cave at Bethlehem, where the Blessed Virgin waited for the time when He, who is the only joy of the faithful, came forth from her to save the world. He was the centre of all their exercises, and His holy fire burning in their hearts, gave them heat and light in the dreariness of their watching. Winter brought its compensation with it at Citeaux as well as to the rest of the world. It was then that they had most time for meditation and prayer in the cloister, or in the church after matins; for lauds were never said till the early dawn, which would of course be then much later than in summer. Prime followed immediately upon lauds, and would generally begin about seven o'clock. Then came the mass, tierce, and the chapter, so that they did not begin to work till after the time prescribed by St. Benedict, which was after tierce, or about half-past nine or ten. The chapter is not here noticed, nor indeed is it mentioned systematically anywhere in his rule; it

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probably became a system, and the hour for it was fixed, after St. Benedict's time.[1] From the time that they went into the fields after the chapter till nones, which were said between two and three, they worked on without breaking their fast till after the hour was said, that is between half-past two and three.[2] After the meal was over, they walked into the church two and two, chanting the Miserere, and there said grace. Vespers followed soon after, for it seems probable that they were said about sunset, but before the twilight had so far faded away as to require candles. Such is Cardinal Bona's opinion, himself a Cistercian, and the lighting of lamps for vespers is not mentioned among the duties of the servant of the church, as he was called.[3] In summer, when a slight repast was allowed in the evening, the quiet of the twilight hour was necessarily interrupted; but in winter, when nothing was permitted after their one meal but a draught of water, nothing broke the repose of the monks after vespers were said. The most breathless stillness reigned in the convent. The brethren sat reading in the cloister, and even signs were forbidden except on special occasions.[4] The evening twilight between vespers and compline was the monk's sabbath. They were forbidden expressly to get into knots and talk together, and almost the only sign allowed was when one brother motioned to another to take care of his book if anything called him out of the cloister. Strange acci-

[1] Reg. St. Ben. 46. [2] Calmet, c. 41.
[3] Bona de Div. Psal. 10. Us. Cist. 105. [4] Us. Cist. 79.

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dents happened to books in those ages which might have made this precaution necessary, as when a bear swallowed, or at least sadly mangled, the manuscript of St. Augustine's Epistles at Cluny,[1] though it is true such visitors would hardly enter a cloister full of monks. During Lent, as their bodily labours were greater, so a longer time was allowed them for meditation and reading. As they did not break their fast till about five o'clock in the evening,[2] they said sext and nones in the field, or at least they returned to their work as soon as they had said them, and continued working till four o'clock.[3] But a longer time was allowed for reading in the morning, and additional mental prayer is especially enjoined at this season.[4] The only reading allowed seems to have been the Holy Scriptures, and on the first Sunday in Lent the cantor distributed a portion of the Bible to each brother, which he was to receive reverently, and stretching out both hands, "for joy at the Holy Scriptures." No greater proof of their austere penitence in the time of Lent can be found than the way in which St. Bernard speaks of it. Sweetly, and with the tenderness of a mother, does he always speak to the brethren at that time. "Not without a great touch of pity, brethren," he once said, "do I look upon you. I cast about for some alleviation to give you, and bodily alleviation comes before my mind; but if your penance be lightened by a cruel pity, then is your crown by degrees stripped of its gems.

[1] Pet. Ven. Ep. 1. 24. [2] Calmet, c. 48.
[3] "Usque ad decimam horam," St. Ben. Reg. 48.
[4] Us. Cist. 15.

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What can I do? Ye are killed all day long with many fasts, in labours oft, in watchings overmuch, besides your inward trials, the contrition of heart and a multitude of temptations. Yea, ye are killed; but it is for His sake who died for you. But if your tribulation abounds for Him, your consolation shall abound through Him. For is it not certain that your sufferings are above human strength, beyond nature, against habit? Another then doth bear them for you, even He doubtless who, as saith the Apostle, beareth up all things by the word of His power."[1]

Two things alone remain to be noticed, which throughout the whole year were the last events of a Cistercian day, and those are the collation or the reading of the collations of Cassian, and compline. At Citeaux these collations, which were a collection of the lives of the early monks, or else some of the books of saints' lives, were read aloud in the cloister. On the finishing of the reading, all turned their faces to the east, and the abbot said, "Our help is in the name of the Lord"; the convent responded, "Who hath made heaven and earth"; and then they proceeded into the church to sing compline, which was the last office of the day. The time for compline varied according to the hour when they retired to rest, which in winter would be about seven, and in summer about eight.[2] As their motions were regulated according to the duration of the light, an approximation only can be made as to their hours of going to bed and rising. After

[1] Serm. in Psalm xc. Preface. [2] Calmet, c. 8.

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compline the abbot rose and sprinkled with holy water each brother as they went out in order. They then pulled their cowls over their heads and walked into the dormitory. Such was the Cistercian life in its first fervour, as it was under Stephen and St. Bernard. Put down upon paper it appears but a dead letter of outward observances; the spirit of obedience, humility, and charity which animated the whole cannot be described in words. The angelical countenances and noiseless, regulated motions of the monks, which had a certain monastic grace of their own, are all missing to light up the whole. The presence, again, of such an abbot as Stephen must be taken into account before a correct idea can be obtained of Citeaux. He could modify the rule to the weak, and direct the energies of the strong; he could call the faint-hearted into his presence in the parlour and give them words of holy counsel. Many things are scattered up and down St. Bernard's writings which show that a rule without the living tradition is not fully intelligible. For instance, from scattered hints it appears that the monks had sometimes a certain time allowed them for conversing together, though that is not mentioned at all in St. Benedict's rule. The fact is, that silence was the general order of the day, but the abbot might allow those whom he judged fit to converse together.[1] In after ages, and not so

[1] V. Calmet, c. 6. St Bern. Serm. de diversis, 17, and Benedictine note; also de Grad. Superbiæ, 13. Also Speculum Monachorum, in the Benedictine St. Bernard, written by Arnulfus, a monk of Bohéries, who flourished in the later part of the twelfth century. The master of the novices held frequent conversations with them, vid. Adam of Perseigne, in Baluzius Misc. vol. ii. 236.

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long after Stephen's time, these conversations were systematised, and placed at set hours; but before then they seem to have been at the discretion of the abbot. How naked and dead are the words of a rule without the living abbot to dispense them, to couple together the strong and the weak, that the sturdy warrior might help on the trembling soldier, and to mingle the roughness of discipline with the tender hand which dropped oil and wine on the wounded heart! Stephen, though God had removed the pains which had so long afflicted him, had now an anxious charge upon his hands, no less than the training up of St. Bernard.

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CHAPTER XVI

STEPHEN AND BERNARD

THE poor house of Citeaux was now, as we have seen, perfect; it had not only a strict rule, and a ruler to teach it, but it had also novices to whom it was to be taught. It had now become too small for its inmates, and the despised convent, which but lately was looked upon with fear rather than admiration, had now the choice of all the fair fields of France, and by and by of Europe, at its command. Many were the children of her that was called barren, and every year band after band of monks was sent out from the now teeming house to form new monasteries, and these again increased and multiplied, till every kingdom of Europe was filled with the daughters of Citeaux. Soon after the arrival of St. Bernard and his companions at the convent, Stephen was summoned away from home for the purpose of founding the new monastery of La Ferté in the diocese of Châlons. Walter, bishop of Châlons, and two noblemen of the country, on hearing that Citeaux was too full, had immediately looked out for a place where they might house the new colony, and proposed to Stephen to found a convent on their ground. He gladly accepted the offer, and himself accompanied

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the brethren whom he destined for this service to their new abode. In a few days he returned to his abbey of Citeaux. The charge which God had entrusted to him was the more anxious, because St. Bernard's state of health was exceedingly precarious. The thinness of his slightly-built frame[1] showed in what a frail earthen vessel that precious soul was contained. His neck especially was very long and delicate, so that when he threw back his cowl, none could help remarking it, and the monks praised its snowy whiteness and its elegance, like that of a swan.[2] His life was even endangered by the narrowness of his throat; but his most troublesome infirmity was the weakness of his stomach, which rejected a great portion of the food which he had swallowed. With all these ailments he had entered the strictest order of the day, and now that he had thus put his hand to the plough, he was determined not to look back. He had entered the abbey of Citeaux in order to bury himself from the world, to become a poor man and a rustic, not simply to hide under a white cuculla an ambitious heart, nor even to give himself time to exercise a fine imagination on holy subjects. Every day therefore he used to excite himself forward, by repeating to himself, "Bernard, Bernard, wherefore art thou here?" He earnestly set himself to work on the rough occupations in which the Cistercians passed their day. His attenuated frame was bent down with the rude labours of the field, and his delicate

[1] "Corpus tenuissimum, statura mediocritatis honestæ, longitudini tamen vicinior apparebat." Gauffridi Vita, c. 1.

[2] Exord. Mag. 7. 17.

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skin worn with holding the spade and the hoe. Nor did he work listlessly like a man who takes up a fork and makes hay on a fine sunshiny day, but he laboured with a will in downright earnestness, as if it had been the business of his life. His weak body often sank under these labours; and often the awkwardness of his hands, which were used to far other work than digging and mowing, and such like toils, obliged his superiors to separate him from his brethren at the hours of manual labour. He was, however, never happy on these occasions, and if he could not work with the convent, he immediately began cutting wood or carrying burdens on his shoulders.[1] Stephen seems to have been especially careful of him in this respect: during the harvest he had made many attempts at reaping, but was too weak and too little accustomed to such work to succeed; he was therefore ordered to lie by, and sit by himself, while, as says William of St. Thierry, the brethren were reaping with fervour and joy in the Holy Ghost. This was a sore trouble to him, and in the simplicity of his heart he began to weep; he then prayed to God to give him grace, so that he might be able to join his brethren in their labours. From that day forward he became a most expert reaper, and the same William, his personal friend, asserts that, even up to the period when he was writing his account, St. Bernard was wont to say with self-gratulation, and a sort of joyous triumph, that he was the best reaper of them all. This hard work, to which he subjected himself in order to

[1] Guil. Vit. 1. 4.

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carry out his rule, was the more remarkable in him, not only because of his extreme weakness, but from the exceeding austerity with which he lived. His very existence was a miracle, for he hardly seemed to eat, drink, or sleep, and his friends wondered how he could live. In after times he himself severely taxed his own austerity, which according to his own account had made him useless to the Church. It is not on record that Stephen checked him in his mortification of the flesh; he probably looked upon his youthful novice with a saintly wonder, as one whom God's Holy Spirit was leading according to His own blessed will, and with whom he must not interfere. Indeed, so much had this severe way of life become the habit of both body and soul, that he hardly could have increased his diet if he would.[1] St. Bernard is indeed one who cannot be judged by ordinary rules. God has set His seal upon His saint, by the wonderful things which He wrought through him, and none must rudely venture to blame his actions. He, in his white Cistercian dress, was raised up, for the needs of the Church, just as was John the Baptist in his garment of camel's hair; and when he came forth from his monastery, and the world streamed forth to view him, and kiss the hem of his poor monkish habit, it was then seen that his weak frame, with the spirit of love and supernatural energy shining through it, and the flaming words of divine eloquence bursting from his lips, could serve God and His Church to good purpose indeed. But this is not the place to speak

[1] Guil. i. 4.

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of him as the companion of kings, the setter up of popes, and the real governor of the Church; it is only as a Cistercian monk that he appears here, and in this capacity his wonderful way of life was not thrown away. It subdued his body to his spirit to such a degree, that he seemed to live the life of an angel upon earth. His soul was wrapped up in a ceaseless contemplation of God, and he realised the crucifixion of the flesh of which St. Paul speaks, and all things which belong to the Spirit grew and flourished in him. His senses, from the abstraction of his soul, seemed to be dead within him. He did not know whether the ceiling of the novices' cell was arched or flat, though he passed there every day of his life. Again, the choir of the church of Citeaux had three windows, but to the last he fancied it had only one. So little conscious was he of the sense of taste, that he more than once drank oil instead of water, without perceiving it. It was this deadness to earth, which made him see so far into heavenly things as he did. Earnest as he was in working at the lowest manual labour, this habit of praying always never forsook him. It was this habit, which he acquired at Citeaux under Stephen's discipline, which was the source of all his power. The Holy Spirit filled him with rapturous joys which only crucified souls can know; and this unction which anointed him from above, he poured back upon the Church, and thus enabled her to resist the dry and cold rationalistic heresies which then threatened to overwhelm her with the maxims of worldly science. It was this education too, in the cloister of Citeaux, before the morning light, and at

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the feet of Stephen in the auditorium, which made him the great founder of the science of the interior life of the Christian. He has been called the last of the Fathers, and he thus stands on the confines of the system of the early Church, which contemplated God as He is in Himself, and that of the later ages, in which the mysterious dealings of God with the soul of the individual Christian were minutely analysed. It is not to be supposed that he was so abstracted from the world as to be either singular in his demeanour or dead to earthly affection. He cast off a hair shirt which he had constantly worn next to his skin, lest in a monastery where all things were done in common it should be observed. Though his habit was of coarse and poor materials, yet it was always scrupulously clean. He used to say that dirt was the mark of a careless mind, or of one that cherished a fond idea of its own virtue, or loved the silly praise of men. His motions were ever regulated, and bore humility on the face of them, and a sweet fragrance of piety was shed around his person and his actions, so that all looked upon his countenance with joy.[1] His voice was singularly clear, notwithstanding the weakness of his body, and in after times its very tones won even those who did not understand the language which he spoke. In conversation the spirit of charity shone through all his words, and he always spoke of what most interested his companion, making inquiries about his trade or profession, as if he had especially

[1] Gauf. 2.

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studied it all his life. Stephen did not prevent his seeing and conversing with his relations when they came to Citeaux, and on these occasions his courtesy was such, that his exceedingly tender conscience would sometimes prick him as though he had spoken idle words. On one occasion he devised a strong expedient; when summoned to see some of his friends who had come to visit him, he stopped his ears with tow, so that his deafness might give him an air of stupidity. Loud laughter in a monk was an object of his special aversion, and he has recorded it in one place of his writings by a graphic picture of the light-minded monk laughing to himself. He describes him covering his face with his hands, compressing his lips, clenching his teeth, and laughing as though he would not laugh, till at length the suppressed mirth burst out through his nostrils.[1] With all this hatred of levity, which thus appears in the almost ludicrous vividness of his description, he would on occasion even force himself to smile. Another characteristic of Bernard's soul was the wonderful strength of his affections. Though he had torn himself thus rudely from all earthly affections, yet the wounds which he had suffered in the conflict did not close over a hardened heart, but he carried them with him all bleeding to the cloister. Even long after his novitiate was over, nay, to his last day, the tenderness of this maternal heart cost him many a pang; chiefly if any one of his brethren went wrong, he mourned over

[1] De Grad. Hum. et Sup. 12.

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them with a passionate grief, with which he in vain struggled, as though it were an imperfection. On occasion of his brother Gerard's death, he endeavoured to preach one of his sermons on the Canticles without alluding to it, but it was too much for him: in the midst of the sermon, his grief bursts forth, and down fall the bitter tears, which he had pent up so long, and he breaks out into expressions of the most vehement and impassioned sorrow. He kept to the very last the most vivid recollection of his mother; he carried it with him into Citeaux, and every day before he went to bed, he recited the seven penitential psalms for the repose of her soul. This practice is connected with the only time on record when Stephen reproved his illustrious disciple. One night he went to bed without having repeated his psalms: in some way it came to Stephen's knowledge that it was his practice thus to pray for his mother, and that night he knew that his novice had left that duty unfulfilled. It may be that God revealed to him the whole matter, or else by the strange spiritual instinct which those intimately connected with others possess, he read in his face that something had been left undone overnight. Mothers possess this instinct, and why should not the abbot, who watched over his young disciple with a mother's love? However it came into his mind, at all events he did know it, and that in some uncommon way. Next morning he called Bernard to him, and said, "Brother Bernard, where, I pray you, hast thou dropped those psalms of thine yesterday, and to whose good keeping hast

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thou committed them?" Bernard, being shy, as says the history, blushed, and marvelled much within himself how the abbot knew that of which he alone possessed the secret. He perceived that he stood in the presence of a spiritual man, and fell at Stephen's feet, begging pardon for his negligence, which, as we may suppose, he was not long in obtaining. Such is one of the few specimens of Stephen's way of guiding his novice, which time has spared. The other circumstances of the intercourse between these two elect souls are known only to God and His angels. Historians mention but slightly even the solemn ceremony by which St. Bernard knelt at the feet of Stephen to take his vows on quitting the novitiate, the year after his entering the convent. This was the culminating point of the abbot's life; his great work was the training of St. Bernard; henceforth the materials for his history become scanty, for he appears only the administrator of his order, the history of which is merged in St. Bernard. He had passed the great trials of his life, and he now lived in comparative peace, founding new abbeys every year, and quietly watching the growth of the mighty tree into which his grain of mustard seed had grown. Doubtless he who had so often tried to hide his head in the depths of a forest, did not now regret that his light had waned before his illustrious disciple. And let no one suppose that he is doing nothing because his name occurs but seldom; every new monastery founded year by year is his work, and he is gradually becoming the head of a vast federacy of which he is the legislator, as well as abbot of his own convent

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of Citeaux. While St. Bernard is astonishing the world by his supernatural power over the minds of men, every now and then, from Citeaux, the central point in which these vast rays of glory converge, some new act of monastic policy issues, which is owing to its abbot.

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CHAPTER XVII

STEPHEN CREATES AN ORDER

MEANWHILE, the Cistercian order was silently growing up about him; in 1114, Hugh, once lord of Mâcon, St. Bernard's friend, was sent to Pontigny with a colony of monks from Citeaux; in 1115, Morimond and Clairvaux were founded. And who was to be abbot of Clairvaux? Surely some brother of mature age, and of tough sinews and hardy frame, for the other three abbeys were founded by special invitation of some bishop, nobleman, or other holy person, but the colony which peopled Clairvaux set out like knight-errants on an adventure, not knowing whither they went. Yet to the surprise of all, Stephen fixes on St. Bernard, though he was hardly out of his novitiate, and was just twenty-five years of age; and though his weak frame was but ill able to bear the exercises of Citeaux, far less apparently to set out on a voyage of discovery, to find out the most lonely forest, vale, or mountain-side that the diocese of Langres could produce. Twelve monks were sent with this youthful abbot to represent the twelve Apostles; he himself was to be to them in the place of Christ. The usual form with which such an expedition set out was characteristic. Stephen delivered to him who

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was to be the new abbot a crucifix in the church of Citeaux, and then in perfect silence he set out, his twelve monks following him through the cloister. The abbey gates opened and closed upon them, and the great world which they had not seen for many a day lay before them. Forward they went, over hill and down dale, St. Bernard going first with the holy rood, and the twelve following, till they came to a deep glen between two mountains, whose sides were clothed with a forest of oaks, beeches, and limes; between them flowed the clear waters of the river Aube. The place was called, for some unknown reason, the Valley of Wormwood, and had been the haunt of robbers. In St. Bernard's hands it became Clairvaux, or the Vale of Glory. Here, then, with the assistance of the peasants round, they established themselves, and Stephen soon had the consolation to hear that the daughter of Citeaux was rivalling her mother. These first four abbeys founded by him, La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, were the heads of what were afterwards called the four filiations of Citeaux; from each of them sprang a whole line of monasteries. Stephen foresaw that this would be the case; in fact it could not be otherwise; the only thing which in those ages of faith was required to found a monastery was men, and those he had with him already. There was no need of money, or of leave from king, privy council, or parliament. All that was wanted was an old wood or a wild waste, which the owner, if there was one, would be glad enough to give up to any one who chose to expel the wild beasts and break it up for tillage.

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The spiritual children of Citeaux were therefore sure to increase, now that four flourishing abbeys had already sprung from it. The question, however, was, how these were to be bound to the parent monastery. In after ages, as soon as the first generation had passed away, they would become simply Benedictines, with a white habit, and there was no guarantee whatever that they would keep to the peculiar institutions of Citeaux. Stephen's first step to remedy this evil was the institution of the general chapter; every year all the abbots of monasteries descended from Citeaux were to meet there on Holy Cross day, to confer on the affairs of the order; and their first meeting took place in the year 1116. Though only four abbots were present at this assembly, it is an important event in the history, not only of the Cistercian, but of every other order. In the institution of the general chapter, Stephen had devised an expedient, which went far to remedy the great defect of the early monasteries—the want of a proper jurisdiction. His idea was as yet imperfectly developed; it was but the first germ of the government which was to bind the Cistercian order together; but it was a hint by which all Christendom profited, for so beneficially was it found to work, that Cluniacs, Dominicans, Franciscans, and the various congregations of the Benedictine order adopted it. Innocent III. seems to have been struck with the profound wisdom of Stephen's plan, for in the celebrated fourth Lateran Council, where he presided, it was the system brought in to revive the monastic discipline, which in many places had been ruined; and the

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general chapters of Citeaux are expressly taken as a model.

This assembly at Citeaux was remarkable also in another respect; it has been said that only four abbots were present at it. Where then was my lord of Clairvaux? Alas! it is not hard to know what has become of him. In the midst of the holy conference, an unexpected visitor comes into the chapter-house in the dress of a bishop. The abbots ought to have risen to beg the blessing of this prince of the Church, thus suddenly appearing among them. Instead of this, he prostrated himself on the ground in the presence of Stephen and his brethren. This was no other than the celebrated William of Champeaux, once the great doctor of the schools, now bishop of Châlons; in that lowly posture he informed the abbot of Citeaux that Bernard was hard at death's door, and would certainly die if he were allowed to continue administering the affairs of his abbey. On his knees, therefore, the venerable bishop begged of Stephen to transfer his authority over St. Bernard to himself for the space of a year. The abbot of course willingly acceded to his request, backed as it was by the humble guise of William, and St. Bernard was accordingly, by virtue of his vow of obedience, compelled to give himself up entirely into his hands. For the space of a year, therefore, he was removed to a habitation built for him outside the walls of Clairvaux, and was put under the hands of a physician, whom he was ordered implicitly to obey.

Stephen began about this time to enter into relation with another illustrious personage, whose friend-

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ship was afterwards of great use to the order. William of Champeaux was not the only bishop who came to Citeaux: in the year 1117 it received within its walls Guido, archbishop of Vienne, then apostolical legate in France, and afterwards destined, as Pope Calixtus II., to close the great struggle which Gregory VII. began. He had been to Dijon to celebrate a council, to which it is probable that Stephen himself was summoned. When the council was over he repaired to Citeaux as Stephen's guest, and there conceived an attachment to the rising order, which he carried with him to the papal throne. However different was the lot to which Guido and Stephen had been called, one shut up in a cloister, the other a powerful archbishop, and leader of a great party in the Church, yet there was something not uncongenial in their characters. The untiring and patient energy with which Stephen had struggled through his difficulties, and was now in fact reviving monastic discipline throughout France, was not unlike the quiet firmness with which Guido was awaiting the conclusion of the contest between Church and State. When Pascal committed the unhappy fault which embarrassed the cause of the Church, the archbishop of Vienne, as legate of the holy see, immediately excommunicated the emperor, and then, though he did not join in the impetuous zeal of those who would have deposed the pope, he waited patiently, without for a moment quitting the position which he had taken up, till Pascal, the year before this visit to Citeaux, confirmed the sentence which he had pronounced.

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Before he left the abbey, he begged of Stephen to send a colony of monks into his own diocese of Vienne, promising to provide them with all that was necessary. To this request Stephen willingly acceded, and went thither in person to found the abbey of Bonneval.

These few years which followed St. Bernard's entrance into the abbey are quite a specimen of the general tenor of Stephen's life. In 1118, the year that Bonneval was founded, two more abbeys were also peopled with Cistercian colonies—Prouilly in the diocese of Sens, and La Cour-Dieu in that of Orleans. At the same time, two more monasteries were founded from Clairvaux. Nine abbeys, therefore, had sprung from Citeaux, in the short space of five years, and it now became needful to provide a constitution for the rising order. This was effected by Stephen at the general chapter in 1119; and the means which he took to effect this great object have a sagacity about them which shows how deeply he had studied the wants of the monastic body. They entitle him to rank amongst the most illustrious of the many founders of orders who have in different ways given a new direction to the enthusiasm of Christians, as the needs of the Church required. He filled up a want which St. Benedict's rule did not, and indeed was not intended to supply, and that was the internal arrangement of a body of monasteries connected with each other. St. Benedict legislated for a monastery, Stephen for an order. The idea of the great patriarch of western monks was, that each monastery was to be a monarchy under its

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abbot; no abbey, as far as the rule of St. Benedict goes, is in any way connected with another. In one extraordinary case the abbots of neighbouring monasteries may be called in to interfere in the election of an abbot;[1] but in general each monastery was an independent community. This rude and imperfect system of government was the ruin of monastic institutions; the jurisdiction of bishops was utterly inadequate to keep refractory monks in order, or to preserve monastic discipline in its purity. So entirely had the rule of St. Benedict at one time disappeared from France, that its very existence before the time of St. Odo of Cluny has been questioned. In some monasteries lay-abbots might be found quietly established, with their wives and children, and the tramp of soldiers, the neighing of horses, and baying of hounds, made the cloister more like a knight's castle than a place dedicated to God's service.[2] A specimen of the way in which bishops were treated when they undertook to reform abbeys may be found in the conduct of the monks of Fleury, on the Loire, when St. Odo was introduced into the abbey to tame them. Two bishops and two counts accompanied the abbot, but the monks minded them, says the story, no more than pagans and barbarians; they fairly buckled on the sword, posted themselves at the gates, got a plentiful supply of stones and missiles on the roof, and declared that they would rather die than receive an abbot of another order within their walls. The bishops might have remained outside the walls for ever,

[1] Reg. c. 64.

[2] Mabillon, Pref. in Sæc. 5.

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had not the intrepid abbot mounted his ass, and quietly ridden alone into the abbey, to the astonishment of the monks, who were too much struck with his courage to oppose him. Two general reformations of monastic institutions were effected before Stephen's time, and both were directed at the evil which we have mentioned; St. Benedict of Aniane, by his personal influence, united all the abbeys of the Carlovingian empire into one congregation; but after his death, they relapsed into their former state. The other reform was much more permanent; it was effected by the celebrated congregation of Cluny. When monasteries were in a state of the lowest degradation, still there was vitality enough in this mass of corruption to give birth to a line of saints, such as that of the first abbots of Cluny. By the sole power of their holiness they bound into one a vast number of abbeys, all dependent upon their own. This great congregation appears not to have been fully systematised till the time of St. Hugh; before him, abbeys seem in some cases to have become again independent, when the abbot of Cluny died who had reformed them. He, however, required it as a previous condition of a monastery which joined itself to the congregation, that it should become a priory dependent on Cluny and that its superior should be appointed by himself and his successors.[1] A noble and a stately kingdom was that of Cluny; 314 monasteries and churches were its subjects;[2] its lord was a temporal prince, and

[1] Mabillon, Sæc. v. Pref. 56.
[2] Thomassin, de Nov. et Vet. Disc. 1. 368.

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in spirituals subject to none but the Holy See; he coined money in his own territory of Cluny, as the king of France in his royal city of Paris, and the broad pieces of the convent went as far as the fleurs-de-lis of the Louvre. This spiritual kingdom extended to Constantinople, and even to the Holy Land. Great indeed it was; too great for any man to possess, who was not as noble-minded as St. Hugh, and as free from selfish feelings as the graceful and loving soul of Peter the Venerable. At the time when Stephen completed the Cistercian order, Cluny was in the hands of one who ruled it between the time of St. Hugh and Peter, Abbot Pontius, who spoilt the whole. He must needs be called by the proud name of Abbot of Abbots, and assume a haughty superiority over the abbot of Mount Cassino, the most ancient Benedictine abbey. This was the fault of the system; one bad abbot ruined all; Pontius left to his successor a house loaded with debt, with 300 monks to support on revenues which were barely sufficient to maintain 100, besides a rabble of guests and paupers who infested the gates of the abbey. With these disorders before his eyes, Stephen determined on instituting a system of reciprocal visitation between the abbeys of his order. He might, as abbot of Citeaux, have constituted himself the head of this increasing congregation; but his object was not to lord it over Christ's heritage, but to establish between the Cistercian abbeys a lasting bond of love. The body of statutes which he presented to his brethren in the general chapter of 1119 was called the Chart of Charity. In its provisions,

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the whole order is looked upon as one family, united by ties of blood; Citeaux is the common ancestor of the whole, and the first four abbeys founded from it, La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, as its four eldest daughters, respectively governed the abbeys sprung from them. The abbot of Citeaux was called "Pater universalis ordinis"; he visited any monastery that he pleased, and wherever he went the abbot gave up his place to him. On the other hand, the abbots of the four filiations, as they were termed, visited Citeaux, besides which each abbot went every year to inspect the abbeys which had sprung from his own. Every year a general chapter was held at Citeaux, which all the abbots in the order, without exception, were obliged to attend under heavy penalties. The chief abbot of each filiation could, with the advice of other abbots, depose any one of his subordinate abbots who after admonition continued to violate the rule; and even the head of the whole order might be deposed by the four abbots, though not without a general chapter, or in case of urgent necessity, in an assembly of abbots of the filiation of Citeaux. Each abbey was to receive with joy any of the brethren of other Cistercian abbeys, and to treat him as though he were at home. Thus the most perfect union was to be preserved amongst the whole body; and if any discord arose in the general chapter, the abbot of Citeaux might, with the help of other abbots called in by himself, settle the question in dispute. This is but a faint outline of the famous Chart of Charity, which was copied by many other orders, and in part even by that

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of Cluny. This rigid system of mutual visitation might seem to have precluded the visitation of the bishop, and so in fact the order became in time exempt from episcopal superintendence; but Stephen by no means intended that such should be the case. Exemptions from the jurisdiction of the Vicar of Christ, as St. Bernard calls the bishop of the diocese,[1] formed one of the special grievances against which the early Cistercian writers most loudly declaim. It was a portion of the ambition of abbots of the day, and was therefore classed by them with the assumption of the pontifical mitre and sandals, which was such a scandal in Cistercian eyes. Exemptions, however, which were not gained at the suit of the abbot, but conceded by the Holy See to the piety of founders of monasteries, are excepted from the censure by St. Bernard; and, notwithstanding Stephen's submission to diocesan authority, he took care to secure his order against the influence of secular bishops. Even from the time of Hugh, the second abbot elected by Stephen, the words "salvo ordine nostro" were added to the oath of canonical obedience, taken by every abbot on receiving the benediction from the bishop. Another important step was taken by him to secure his order and its new constitution from undue interference. He determined to apply to the Apostolic See for a confirmation of the Charta Charitatis; without this sanction it was a mere private compact between the then ruling Cistercian abbots, but with the papal sanction it became in some way a law

[1] De Off. Episc. 9.

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of the Church. Stephen was not obliged to send all the way to Rome to obtain this confirmation from the Pope; great things had been doing in Christendom all this while that Citeaux had been flourishing. Pascal II. had died, and, after one short year, Gelasius too had died, not at Rome in his own palace, but an exile at Cluny. Into that year were crowded troubles as great as had ever befallen the successor of St. Peter since the days of martyrdom. A troubled life, indeed, had been the life of Gelasius, ever since he had left his peaceful studies at Mount Cassino, and been made Chancellor of Rome, to amend the latinity of the papal court, where, as says Pandulf, "the ancient style of elegance and grace was almost lost."[1] Rougher tasks he found than this, for he shared in all the troubles of the popes during that long struggle, and at last he himself from Cardinal John Cajetan was made Pope Gelasius II. In the very ceremony of his enthronement, he was thrown from his seat by the emperor's party, dragged by the hair out of the church, and at its very door stamped upon, so that the rowels of the spurs of his persecutors were stained with his blood. Then he fled from Rome by water, amidst a tempest of thunder and wind, and what was worse, amidst the curses of the Germans, who stood on the shore ready to seize him if they could; and so they would, if it had not been for the fearful night, and for Cardinal Hugo, who, when they landed, carried the holy father on his back to a safe castle. In

[1] Muratori, Scrip. iii. part i. p. 378.

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exile he remained the rest of his life, with but one short interval, when he ventured to return to Rome, and again the impious nobles rose, and swords were drawn about him, till at last he said, "Let us fly this city, this Sodom, this new Babylon!" and all cried, "Amen!" and so he left Rome for ever, and came to France, the general refuge of popes in those dreadful times. His successor was chosen in France, and this was no other than Guido, Archbishop of Vienne, of the noble house of Burgundy, and the friend of Stephen and of Citeaux, who now was called Pope Calixtus II. He it was to whom God gave grace to finish the struggle between the Church and the emperor, and to receive the submission of Henry V. But this was not to be till afterwards. During the year when the Chart of Charity was framed, which was also the first of his ruling the Church of Christ, he remained in France, and held a council at Rheims, where he excommunicated the emperor. In December Stephen's messenger found him at Sedelocum, a place supposed to be Saulieu, in Auvergne, and with the consent of the bishops of the dioceses in which the Cistercian abbeys were situated, he fully confirmed all the measures which Stephen had, with the consent of his brethren, determined upon for the preservation of peace in his order. The Chart of Charity was not a dead letter; if the Spirit of God had not been in that house, it would have been but so much parchment. But that blessed Spirit was there in effect; else how could so many men of different age, temper, rank of life, and country, have lived together in peace? It is

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easy at times to make great sacrifices; but it is hard to keep up the intercourse of every-day life without jars and rents, and still harder, while the body is suffering from fatigue and mortification, to preserve the graceful and noiseless considerateness which attends without effort to a brother's little wants. The very chapter where the Chart was passed presents an instance of the sort. It appears that on occasion of the general chapter to mark the joy of Citeaux at the presence of its sons, the stranger abbots were regaled with a pittance or addition to their frugal meal. But the fathers saw that in consequence of this additional mess everything went wrong in the abbey; the poor cooks were put out by the unwonted feast, and then when all was over, the dishes had to be washed, and the servants had to get their dinner, and so vespers were late,[1] and the poor monks robbed of a portion of their scanty sleep. The abbots were unwilling that their arrival should give so much trouble, and they begged of Stephen that the pittance should no more be given; and he, with the consent of the brethren, acceded to their request.

[1] Us. Cist. 108. 77.

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CHAPTER XVIII

ABBOT SUGER

THE administration of his order was quite enough to occupy Stephen's time; year after year new abbeys were founded, and Cistercian monasteries rose up on all sides to the astonishment of the world. He had often to undertake long journeys for the foundation of some new community; and besides these toils, the actual government of such a large body of men required no ordinary attention. It is not to be supposed that there were no dangers in the way of monks, or that signal falls, even in his most promising disciples, did not at times happen to grieve his heart. For instance, in the year 1125, Arnold, whom he had made abbot of Morimond, one of the four governing abbeys of the order, suddenly grew disgusted with his charge, and while Stephen was absent in Flanders, suddenly left the cloister, carrying away with him several of the brethren. His pretence was a pilgrimage; but he never returned to his abbey, and died soon after at Cologne, a runaway monk. While, however, Stephen was thus busied in managing his own abbeys, a reform was silently going on in another and a most important quarter, from the mere increasing weight of the Cistercian order. It might

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have been supposed that the Cistercian, occupied in digging the soil, in draining marshes, and reducing waste lands into cultivation, would certainly be a great comfort to the poor amongst whom he laboured, and whose life he imitated; but it could hardly be expected that their influence could reach higher; and yet so it was. The bishop's palace and the king's court, unhappily at this time too much allied, both began to feel the influence of the bold stand in favour of Christian poverty which Stephen was making. About the year 1214, Peter, abbot of La Ferté, had been chosen archbishop of Tarantaise, and with the consent of Stephen and the general chapter, had accepted it. Cistercian bishops were still bound to keep the rules of the order; they did not wear the fur garments, with sleeves lined of a blood-red colour,[1] which scandalised St. Bernard, but they kept the abbot of the order covered with only a poor mantle lined with sheep-skin.[2] In the two following years France was astonished by the conversion of three of the most powerful prelates of the country—Henry, archbishop of Sens; Stephen, bishop of Paris; and the celebrated Suger, abbot of St. Denis. By conversion it is not meant that these men led vicious or immoral lives; on the contrary, they were men whom it was impossible not to admire for the noble way in which they led what was then the better party in the state; but they were ambitious and courtly men, half soldier or statesman, and the rest churchman. It was the time when the French

[1] St. Bern. de Off. Epis. 2.

[2] Inst. Cap Gen. 59.

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royalty was with the help of the Church rousing itself; the king of France had been but a king in name, often pious and devout, but seldom great or intellectual. In England our Norman lords were the real heads of a feudal sovereignty; they ruled by right of conquest, and the barons were kept under by common fear of the Saxons. But the poor king of France, in his royal city of Paris, was hemmed in on all sides by dukes of Normandy, and counts of Anjou, Blois, and Flanders, a mere shadow of Charlemagne, very different from his wily, unscrupulous, powerful majesty of England, the fine clerk who held his brilliant court at Westminster. In Louis VI.'s time, however, the French monarchy began to develop itself; he was an energetic and in many respects an estimable prince, brought up in his youth in the abbey of St. Denis, and even at one time inclined to become a monk. He made common cause with the Church against the nobles, who were wholesale robbers of Church lands, and respected neither his royal crown nor the bishop's mitre. But what had monarchy to do with Stephen, or Stephen with monarchy, that his poor order should be brought into the affairs of the kingdom? And yet strange to say, it came across King Louis's plans by converting his minister. The very head of the political movement was won, when Suger's heart was touched by St. Bernard's burning words, and when the royal abbey of St. Denis was reformed by the example of the Cistercians. A noble heart was Suger's, even while the world had too great a share in it. Nothing low or mean ever entered into it; all, as even St. Ber-

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nard allows, that stained it, was too great a love of show and of worldly grandeur.[1] Who but that man of little stature, of piercing eye, and sagacious and withal upright heart, had, when provost of Toury, broken the power of Hugh of Puiset, that thorn in the side of the Church, who put lance in rest against the king himself? In his monkish cowl he rode into the town of Toury, even through the enemies who besieged it, and saved it for the king. No business was safe unless Suger was in it; his abbot Adam, and the king, both loved him, and sent him more than once even across the Alps; and no wonder, for his eloquence and learning were so great, that not only could he quote the Fathers, but even would repeat two or three hundred lines together of Horace by heart. He had once just quitted Pope Calixtus on one of these expeditions, and was on his way back to France at an inn, and had said matins at night, and had laid him down again to sleep, when he dreamed a dream—that he was at sea in a little boat tossed about by the waves, but was rescued by the help of the blessed martyr St. Denis. Then he went on his journey, and was pondering what it all meant, when he saw coming towards him a brother of the abbey, with a face of mingled sorrow and joy; and the brother told that Abbot Adam was dead, that the monks had chosen him abbot of St. Denis, even without waiting for the king's leave, and that the king was very angry, and had put in prison some of the brethren. At this news Suger's

[1] St. Bern. Ep. 78.

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heart was sad; he loved his abbot dearly, and besides his brethren were in prison for his sake, and worst of all, he foresaw a contest between the king his master and the pope about the liberty of election. However, the blessed martyr's prayers helped him through all, and the king confirmed the choice of the monks, and he was installed abbot of the first abbey in France. Then what a life was his when he was thus raised on high! If a turbulent noble was to be put down, Suger was to be there; on one occasion, when he was riding at the head of a body of soldiers to Orleans after his lord the king, he fell in with an officer of Hugh of Puiset, whom he took captive, and put securely into the abbey prison. Rome saw him in 1123 at the Lateran Council; next year the Church of St. Denis showed a memorable scene. The emperor, stung with the excommunication pronounced against him at the council of Rheims, invaded France, the constant ally of the Church. Then the royalty of France plucked up heart, and the men of the country gathered round the king, and all together went to St. Denis, where Louis received the Oriflamme from the hands of Suger at the high altar, with all the chivalry of France standing around him. The cause of God's Church prevailed, and the emperor took himself back to Germany, without waiting to see the Oriflamme unfurled. This was all very well; Suger was on the right side; his policy was the best for France, which was thus slowly finding a bond of union in the king, and getting rid of the petty tyrants which disturbed it. Again, he was on the side of the

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Church, for these nobles were its intolerable oppressors; but still something was wanting to the abbot of St. Denis. The concerns of his soul were not prospering amidst this perpetual tumult. Its wear and tear fretted his body down, and "Abbot Suger," says a monk, "did not get fat as other abbots did."[1] The prayers of the Cistercians, however, were at work, and St. Bernard's words pricked his conscience. Indeed, an honest mind like his could not be long in seeing that he looked very little like a churchman and a monk, as he rode at the head of troops, or moved in the brilliant train of a court. Besides, his own abbey was in a most miserable state: without believing the calumnies of Abelard, it is evident that it was as unlike a monastery as it could well be. It was thoroughly secularised; this ancient sanctuary, once the very soul of the devotion of France, and the burial-place of its kings, was now the centre of the business of the whole realm.

"Deftly and faithfully did Cæsar get his own there; but as for the things of God, they were not paid so faithfully to God."[2] Posts came rushing in from all quarters; the cloister was often filled with armed men; monks might be seen lounging about, idly talking with strangers, and even women were sometimes admitted within its precincts. No wonder that this scene raised Cistercian indignation; but it was not long to continue so. Suger's was an honest heart; he had been entangled by the force of circumstances, even from his youth, in

[1] Vit. Sug. 2. 3. ap. Du Chesne.
[2] St. Bernard, Ep. 78.

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secular affairs, and the hurry of business had prevented his looking about him. Now, however, that the fearful responsibility of the government of the abbey was upon him, it made him shudder. The Cistercian reform was spreading with a wildfire speed about him; it was a declaration from heaven against his own most criminal neglect of the important charge which God had committed into his hands. His long troop of armed retainers, and his sumptuous habits, formed but a poor contrast to Stephen's paltry equipage, as he travelled about in his coarse white garment, with a monk or two and a lay-brother in his train. The soul of Suger sinks within him at the thought of his danger, and he determines to reform both himself and his abbey. If Citeaux had never done more than turn to God this noble heart, its labour would not have been thrown away. By thus suggesting the reform of St. Denis, it was conquering the very stronghold of worldliness; it was purging the Church from the thorough secularisation which a long mixture with the world had brought on. Oh, how must Stephen's heart have leaped within him, when he thus saw his order doing his work! He would most cordially have joined in the devout gush of quiet joy with which Suger thanked God. "Amidst the recovery of the ancient lands of the Church, and the acquirement of new, the spread of this Church all around, the restoration or construction of its buildings, this is the chief, the most grateful, yea, the highest privilege which God in His mercy has given me, that He has fully reformed the holy order, the state of this holy Church, to His own

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honour and that of His saints in the same place, and has settled in peace the end and object of holy religion, by which man attains to the enjoyment of God, without causing scandal or trouble among the brethren, though they were all unaccustomed to it."[1] The conversion of Suger is in itself the justification of Stephen, in the rigid rules of poverty which he adopted at Citeaux; it was the best way of gaining an upright heart, like that of the abbot of St. Denis, to put before him a clear and unquestionable example of holy poverty, which must reach him even in the whirl of secular business. France afterwards called him the father of his country, and it is to the influence of the Cistercian reform that he owed that single-hearted conscientiousness, and that habit of devotion, which kept him up when he was afterwards regent of the whole realm.

It is true that in one particular he was not a disciple of Stephen; he could not bear poverty in the adornment of churches; it was not in his nature, and could not be helped. He even seems evidently to aim at his good friends at Citeaux, when he says, "Every man may have his own opinion; I confess that what pleases me best is, that if there be anything more precious than another, yea most precious of all, it should serve to the ministration of the blessed Eucharist above all things." This difference between St. Denis and Citeaux was in after days curiously illustrated; for Abbot Suger was pondering within himself how to get gems to adorn a magnificent crucifix on the high altar of

[1] Vit. Lud. Grossi ap. Du Chesne, tom. iv. 311.

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the abbey church, when in came three abbots, among whom were my lord of Citeaux (probably Stephen's successor) and another Cistercian abbot, with such a store of jewels as he had never seen before. Thibault, Count of Champagne, another disciple of Citeaux, had out of love for holy poverty broken up two magnificent gold vases, and given them as alms to these abbots, and they came at once to St. Denis, knowing that they should be sure to find a market for them. Unlike the simple choir of Citeaux, the sanctuary of the royal abbey blazed with gold and jewels, with painting and sculpture; there was the cross worked by Eligius, the goldsmith saint, and there were the jasper, the ruby, the sapphire, the emerald, and the topaz, "yea," says Suger, "all the precious stones of old Tyre were its covering, save the carbuncle." All the crowns of the kings of France were there deposited after their death, on the shrine of the martyrs. Yet the abbot's delight in thus adorning the shrine of his Lord was utterly unmixed with selfish feeling, "for," he says, "it is most meet and right that with all things universally we should minister to our Redeemer, who in all things without exception has mercifully deigned to provide for us, who has united our nature to His own in one admirable, never to be divided Person, who, placing us in his right hand, has promised us that we shall verily possess His kingdom; our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God for ever and ever. Amen."[1] It is instructive to see how the Cistercian

[1] Adm. Sug. c. 32.

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influence extended to persons whose minds were of a texture so different from that of the abbot of Citeaux. However Stephen might have been scandalised with the unmonastic appearance of the high altar of St. Denis, he would have found a kindred spirit in its noble-minded abbot, a very Cistercian in simplicity, amidst all this splendour. "This man shames us all," said of Suger a certain abbot of Cluny; "he does not build for himself as we do, but for God only." With all his love for architecture, he built but one thing for himself, and that was a cell ten feet broad and fifteen long. Here was his little bed of straw, hid in the daytime by handsome covering, but during the few hours that he lay there at night, it had nothing on it but the rough Cistercian læna or woollen rug, which St. Alberic substituted for the many coverings of the Cluniac dormitory. Thus he lived, one of the most noble conquests of Citeaux, and through whom, as he afterwards, when regent, had in his hands the appointment of every bishop in the realm, Stephen's love of poverty influenced most materially the whole Church of France.

And what said King Louis, when this strange influence appeared in his own place? He was doing his best for the Church, and was the alliance between Church and State to be broken up, and his ecclesiastical friends to be taken from his very fside, for the sake of a monk like Stephen? The king had patronised the Cistercians, and as appears rom a letter written at this time,[1] had at some

[1] St. Bern. Ep. 45.

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former period joined himself in a fraternity of prayers with them; but now that Henry of Sens and Stephen of Paris left his court to govern their flocks like good pastors, he began to think that Cistercian prayers were very well in their way, provided they did not convert his ministers. Annoyed by the conduct of the bishops, he took occasion of some cabal in the diocese of Paris to seize upon the temporalities of the See; and when the archbishop of Sens, as metropolitan of Paris, took the part of the bishop, he began also to persecute him. It appears that the king had partisans amongst the cardinals, and it was doubtful how the matter would turn out; the poor bishop knew not where to find help, but he bethought himself that there was then sitting an assembly of fearless men who had nothing to expect from the world. He applied to the chapter of Citeaux for letters to the Pope to recommend his cause. The abbots judged it best to write first to the king himself, and St. Bernard composed a letter in the name of the abbot of Citeaux, and his brethren assembled at their annual meeting. Here then was Stephen in direct opposition to kings and cardinals. Strange is the style of the opening of this bold epistle. "To the noble king of the Franks, Louis, Stephen, abbot of Citeaux, and the whole assembly of Cistercian abbots and brethren, health, safety, and peace in Christ Jesus." The wooden crosier of Citeaux against the gold sceptre of the Louvre! the match seems most unequal; but the wooden crosier won the day at last. The cardinals hung back, and there came a decision from Rome in favour of the king, and all seemed to

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be prospering on his side. But there was still a party unsatisfied, which had sprung up silently and imperceptibly around the king, and whose influence now began to be felt across the Alps. Its wishes must henceforth form an item in the consultation of popes and kings. St. Bernard and Hugh of Pontigny cry aloud to the pope himself, in spite of the murmurs of some of the cardinals, who loved not such importunate partisans of justice. At last the Holy See interfered in the bishop's favour, at or about the time of the Council of Troyes, 1128, at which Stephen and St. Bernard were both present.[1] Shortly afterwards, Stephen, with the abbots of Clairvaux and Pontigny, wrote to the Pope in favour of the archbishop of Sens, whom King Louis was still persecuting. They were an uncompromising set of men, whom nothing could satisfy till the oppressed was delivered from the tyranny of his oppressor; these Cistercian frogs would croak out of their marshes,[2] and would not hold their peace, for all the bitter complaints of the cardinals, whose rest was sadly disturbed by their noise. They must needs be at the bottom of every movement in the Church with their importunate poverty. Even the warlike Templars felt its influence, and clothed themselves in their white cloaks "without arrogance or superfluity," and in plain armour, with horse-trappings unadorned with gold and silver. They were first made an order at the Council of Troyes,

[1] Mabillon's notes on St. Bernard, Ep. 45.
[2] St. Bern. Ep. 48.

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in the presence of Stephen, and each provincial master of the Temple took an oath, that he would defend all religious, but, above all, Cistercian monks and their abbots, as being their brethren and fellows.

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CHAPTER XIX

TROUBLES IN THE CHURCH

THE Cistercian influence had, however, not reached its height even at the Council of Troyes: two years after occurred the schism of Anacletus, the decision of which in favour of Innocent II. was, under God, entirely owing to St. Bernard. The question did not originate in a mere quarrel between two parties amongst the cardinals. The election of Innocent II. was a bold innovation, by which the turbulent people of Rome were excluded from any share in choosing the supreme pontiff.[1] There were many wild and unscrupulous barons in Europe, but a Frangipani, a Colonna, or a count of Tusculum could match them all. The very last election of Honorius II. had been brought about by a notorious trick of a Frangipani; and a short time before, Gelasius, in leaving Rome, had said solemnly, that if so be, he had rather fall into the hands of one emperor than of so many. The cardinals, who in this case had elected Pope Innocent, met together without the knowledge not only of the Roman clergy and people, but even of a very large part of the sacred college. This they did, says Suger, for fear of the turbulent Romans. Hence, not only the elec-

[1] Lupus, tom. v. p. 69.

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tion of Petrus Leonis the antipope, but even of the real successor of St. Peter, was informal; it required the subsequent voice of Christendom to constitute Innocent the rightful pope. The impression left on the mind by Suger's clear, statesman-like view of the transaction is, that of the two elections that of Peter was the more formal; and he adds that the Council of Étampes in its decision inquired more about the character than the election of the candidates. The cardinals of Innocent's party had, however, another and a cogent reason for proceeding thus surreptitiously in the election. "They elected Innocent," says an old chronicler, "with too great haste, as some think, in order to exclude Peter, who seemed to aim at the popedom on secular grounds."[1] They were the religious party amongst the cardinals, and they dreaded the election of Peter, who "placed not God for his help, but trusted in the multitude of his riches, in the power of his relations, and in the strength of his fortifications." He was the head of the secular party in the Church, and at a time when the struggle with the emperor on the subject of investitures was but just over, and when the pride and luxury which a long sojourn in kings' courts had introduced were rampant in the very sanctuary, his elevation might have been productive of the worst results. He had at one time been a monk of Cluny, but had been recalled to Rome by Pascal II., who made him a cardinal. From that time he had been actively employed as a legate by the papal court, and in this occupation had added enormous

[1] Chron. Maurin. ap. Du Chesne.

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wealth to the already large property of his family, originally of Jewish extraction. He was one of those purple "satraps, lovers of majesty rather than lovers of truth," whom St. Bernard calls "wolves"; companions not of the "successors of St. Peter, but of Constantine," followers of the pope in the time of triumph, when he rode on a white horse, adorned with gems and gold, not of "the vicar of Christ, the hammer of tyrants and the refuge of the oppressed."[1] The cause of Innocent was therefore that of holy poverty, and it was taken up by all the new monastic orders which sprang up about this time to the edification of the Church, as also by the most flourishing of the ancient convents. "The Camaldolese," says St. Bernard, "they of Vallombrosa, the Carthusians, Cluniacs, and they of the Great Monastery, my own Cistercians too, the monks of Caen, of Tiron, and Savigny, in a word, all together and with one heart, the brethren, whether monks or clerks, who lead a regular life and are of approved conversation, all following the bishops as sheep their pastors, adhere firmly to Innocent." St. Bernard does not here say whom the pastors themselves followed, but it was plain to every one else that he himself led the Catholic world. All the bishops of France, with King Louis, were assembled at Étampes to decide on this question of vital importance, even to the existence of the Catholic Church; but the abbot of Clairvaux was not there, and nothing could be done without him. He came at their bidding, trembling, and

[1] De Consid. lib. iv.

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with a heart beating with fear; but God reassured His servant in a dream, showing him a vast Church with one accord praising God. When he arrived, the whole assembly with one voice declared that Bernard should decide. Calmly, but still with trembling, the servant of God examined the manner of the election, the merits of the electors, and the life and character of the candidates, and then with a royal heart, trusting in the help of God, he pronounced aloud that Innocent was pope; and the whole assembly received his decision without any doubt, believing that he spoke by the Holy Ghost. It does not come within our subject to say how St. Bernard went about, and by his very presence and energetic words turned the hearts of all the kings of Europe to Innocent, the wily Beau Clerc Henry, the hesitating Lothaire, even at last the wild boar of Aquitaine—how he bowed the soul of Christendom as the soul of one man, and placed the successor of St. Peter in his rightful chair, in the teeth of Roger of Sicily, with his new crown and all his Normans. Stephen, of course, followed his illustrious disciple; the success of Innocent was the consummation of the triumph of holy poverty in which he had led the way; and he cheerfully and gladly now gave up the cause into the hands of St. Bernard. While the saint was travelling over land and sea for the peace of the Church, and to his regret was obliged to leave his beloved Clairvaux, Stephen remained quietly in his own abbey, continuing to rule his order. Innocent, however, did not confine his love for Cistercians to St. Bernard. He addressed to Stephen a letter, in which

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he calls him "his dear son in the Lord";[1] and grants to him and to his successors for ever two important privileges. They appear from the terms of the grant to have been given at Stephen's own request, and both are certainly the result of the action of his own principles. His notion of a monastery was a place devoted to contemplation, where the noise and the cares of the world could not penetrate. He wished his monks to know nothing of the bickerings, and the lawsuits, and the selfishness, which were all going on beyond the cloister; a short time before he had himself been drawn away from Citeaux to settle a quarrel between the abbeys of St. Seine and of St. Stephen of Dijon. One privilege therefore, granted to all Cistercian abbots, was concluded in these terms, "And because, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, that ye may be able with the greater freedom to follow out the service of God, and with the clear vision of the soul to dwell at peace in contemplation, we forbid that any bishop or arch-

[1] This document is found in Manriquez, An. 1132, I. 5; it is dated Cluny, February 10; another, dated Lyons, on the 17th of the same month, is found among St. Bernard's works. They were given by Innocent on his way from France back into Italy. It is singular that these two documents are dated according to two different modes of calculation. The privilege granted to St. Stephen, though it was prior to the other, is dated 1132, whilst that granted to St. Bernard is dated 1131; the reason is, because in the latter the year is reckoned to begin on the 25th of March, in the former on the 1st of January. Mabillon, overlooking this, has given 1131 instead of 1132 as the date of the privilege given to St. Bernard; as Innocent dated his years from his election, the 15th of February 1130, a document signed on the 17th of February, in his third year, must be referred to 1132, according to our calculation.

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bishop should compel thee, or thy successors, or any abbot of the Cistercian order, to come to a council or synod save on account of the faith." Stephen, however, not only wished his monks to be out of the way of the quarrels of their neighbours, but also to be independent of worldly cares. The intention of St. Benedict was, that a monk should be a poor man, living on the labour of his own hands; he did not, however, wish him to be in abject penury; the monastery was to possess all necessaries within its walls, so that nothing need be sought for out of the cloister. Stephen had more than once been himself reduced to a state of real want, and had stoutly braved it out with a few energetic spirits about him. Now, however, that Citeaux was a large community, and the head of a flourishing order, the case was widely different; there are, comparatively, many who can live on coarse bread and vegetables, but very few have the heroic patience necessary to struggle under the pressure of want. The soul of conventual life is regularity, which must disappear when the brethren are obliged to make shifts to obtain absolute necessaries. Though Citeaux was not now in danger of so sad a plight, it was a hard matter for the brother cellarer to make both ends meet. The Cistercians had renounced most of the sources of revenue by which other convents were maintained. There was nothing to attract seculars into their churches; no public masses, no shrines of gold and silver. Their property consisted entirely in land, of which they sold the produce; before, however, it could be brought into cultivation, granges were to be

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erected, and live stock to be bought, and much hard labour to be expended. Thus the more land was given to them, the more their expenses increased; and after all there came round the tithe collector, claiming so much for the parish priest, or for the brethren of a certain monastery, to whom the tithes of the parish belonged. It should be remembered that they had themselves renounced all tithes and ecclesiastical property, which was the chief source of revenue in many monasteries, where the brethren never worked with their own hands; besides which, the lands which were given to them were often waste and uncultivated, covered with a rank growth of entangled wood, or else mere marshy pools, the haunts of the heron and the bittern, and which consequently had never paid tithes at all. Considering the poverty of the Cistercians, Innocent freed them from the payment of all tithes. This was no new privilege: all the monasteries of Thuringia, and amongst them the great abbey of Fulda, were at one time exempt from tithes; and the archbishop of Metz, though he claimed tithes from them, allowed that such privileges were granted to rising monasteries. A short time before the rise of Citeaux, the same favour was accorded to the Knights Hospitallers in consideration of their poverty. Again, Peter of Blois, strongly as he reprobated the continuance of the privilege when the order had grown powerful, and had been placed above all the difficulties which its very fecundity, astonishing as it was, at first entailed upon it, allowed that at first it was necessary. Reasonable, however, as was Innocent's grant, it

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raised a tempest about Stephen and his poor Cistercians, which it took many a long year to allay. Enough has been said to show that the Cistercian movement, being in all respects a reformation, would be most likely to meet with opposition from the older monastic institutions. There had long been heart-burnings between Cluny and Citeaux; an ancient and flourishing order like that of Cluny, with all its imposing dignity and its religious magnificence, could not but stand reproved before the elastic spirit and young life which were developing from the obscure convent of Citeaux. It might be venerable and beautiful, but there was a vigour in the uncompromising fervour of the new order, and an unencumbered grace in its holy poverty, which was sure to attract all the ardent spirits in the Church. Hence many a promising monk passed over to the Cistercians, and left sore displeasure behind him among his brethren, to whom his fervour seemed to be a reproach. Around the ancient monasteries there arose everywhere new institutions, not hallowed by time and adorned by the piety of kings, but carrying with them the hearts of the people by the sanctity of their inmates. This new privilege granted by Innocent caused all this smothered flame to burst out; a Cluniac monastery, that of Gigny in Champagne, refused to allow its neighbour, the house of Miroir, to take advantage of the privilege, and still exacted the tithes in the teeth of the authority of the Holy See. It was for this contumacy put under an interdict, in consequence of which the whole Cluniac order

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was up in arms. It was fortunate that Pontius had ceased to be abbot of Cluny, and that Peter the Venerable now ruled over the order. From his position Peter was obliged to support the vast body of which he was the ruler; he therefore addressed a letter of sharp remonstrance to the chapter of Citeaux, and did his best to get the privilege reversed at the papal court; he however never for a moment lost the unbounded love which he felt for the great men who were at the head of this new movement in the Church. The next year, fearing lest his former letter should have been too severe, he wrote to the assembled chapter, to protest that he had the real interests of peace in his heart when he wrote that letter, and concludes with saying, "I rest in peace, and I will rest on you. I rejoice and I will rejoice in you, yea, though injured, I will not depart from you." From the really Christian spirit of this noble-minded man, a real love was maintained among the higher authorities of the two orders; among the inferior members there was, it must be confessed, on the Cistercian side often a Puritanical adhesion to the letter of the rule, and, on the Cluniac, a most unchristian tone of jealousy and mistrust. But the most perfect harmony prevailed between the abbot of Cluny and the ruling body of Citeaux, with Stephen at their head. It was not that Peter did not feel a most filial affection for the noble monastery in which he had learned to know Christ, and over which he now ruled; nor did he fail to be really and acutely pained when the force of circumstances necessarily placed

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him in collision with the Cistercians. But notwithstanding the blows which he thus received in his most tender affections, he ever maintained an unbounded reverence for this new institution which God, through Stephen's means, had raised in the Church. He was content that his light should wane while Stephen, whom the world would call his rival, increased in power and influence every day. Above all, he rejoiced with enthusiasm in St. Bernard's sanctity, and even kissed his letters when they appeared, to gladden his heart; he seems to repose in perfect confidence, as it were on the bosom of a friend, when he writes to the saint; he exercises his playful and polished wit on these occasions, professing that he feels quite secure in thus giving loose to his cheerfulness in his letters to his dear friend; and St. Bernard in return compliments him by saying that he at least could indulge his wit without sin. He strenuously set about reforming his order; and so far from being angered by St. Bernard's indignant remonstrances in his Apology, his new statutes adopt, as far as possible, all the suggestions contained in that celebrated treatise. Some of his reforms are evidently taken from Cistercian regulations, and especially from those made by Stephen himself. Crucifixes of wood were ordered to be used instead of the precious metals, when the holy rood was applied to the lips of a dying monk;[1] it was not a cross of gold or silver, but a cross of wood, which redeemed the world. Again, the

[1] Stat. 62.

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magnificent candlestick of Cluny, which scandalised Cistercian simplicity, was not to be lighted up except on the great festivals; at other times iron candlesticks were to be used.[1] Thus did Stephen's influence extend even to Cluny, notwithstanding the angry monks. The quarrels on the subject of tithes lasted many years even after Stephen's death, but it never destroyed the harmony which prevailed between Peter the Venerable and his friends of the chapter of Citeaux.

[1] Stat. 52.

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CHAPTER XX

DEATH OF STEPHEN

SINCE the admission of St. Bernard into Citeaux, the life of Stephen has been that of his order. History only speaks of him occasionally as a monastic legislator, or as the founder of some new convent. The lord abbot of Citeaux appears sometimes amongst the signatures attached to a council, or to some document which the labour of the Benedictines has brought from the chartulary of a convent. It is well that it should be so, for the great order of Citeaux was Stephen's structure, and on that his noble work his claims to the veneration of the faithful rest. We now, however, come to a part where he is put forward exclusively; his long and laborious life is now drawing to a close. It comes suddenly upon the reader of the Cistercian Annalist, and takes him by surprise to find that the chapter to which Peter the Venerable's letter was addressed was the last held by Stephen. No data are given in his history to ascertain his age, so that his years go on silently, numbered by those of Citeaux, and it seems strange that all at once, when his order is in the height of prosperity, his life, which was the moving principle of the whole, should come to an end. Yet

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so it is even with the greatest saints; man goeth to his labour until the evening, and then leaves it unfinished, and goes home to rest in the grave. At the chapter of 1133, the year after the privilege was granted to the Cistercians by Innocent, when, says the Exordium, "our blessed father, Stephen, had stoutly administered the office committed to him, according to the true rule of humility given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was worn out with old age, and his eyes were blind, so that he could not see, he laid aside his pastoral charge, wishing to think in peace on God, and on himself through the sweet taste of holy contemplation." This is the first word that is said of Stephen's old age, and up to this time we might have fancied him as vigorous as ever, with his eyesight clear, and his faculties unimpaired. But although his eyes had failed, and his body was in darkness, yet the vision of his soul was as bright as ever; he was still to the last the Cistercian contemplative, who had fled to the forest, and to the desert, to dwell with God alone. Before, however, his soul was freed from its earthly tabernacle, Stephen had still a trial to undergo; God willed that his saint should die with his arms in his hands. The electors to whose task it fell to choose a successor, on Stephen's resignation, pitched upon a man who was utterly unworthy to succeed him. Wido, abbot of Three Fountains, had by some means deceived men into an opinion of his sanctity, and though, as the Exordium calls him, he was but a whited sepulchre, the abbots pitched upon him to govern the abbey and the whole order. Stephen

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knew what sort of a man he was; it is even said that God specially revealed to him the wickedness of this new abbot. By that wonderful inward vision which God sometimes grants His saints, he could see his successor receiving the profession of the monks, though his outward eye was blind; when lo! God showed him the evil spirit entering in at his mouth, as he sat on high amidst the brethren, coming one by one to do him reverence. Stephen, however, remained still; he felt sure that God would not abandon the rising order, and he did not choose to take upon him again a government which he had just laid down, by interfering with the free choice of the monks. St. Bernard was absent in Italy, and therefore he could not apply to him; in full trust therefore upon God, he waited till the designs of Providence should manifest themselves. With this dreadful secret on his mind he held his peace. He had not long to wait, for "scarcely had one month passed away, when by the revelation of the Lord his uncleanness was laid bare, and this bastard plant which the heavenly Father had not planted was rooted out of Paradise." What was the sin of Wido is not known, and his name does not even occur in the common catalogue of Cistercian abbots; the brethren seem to have tried to sink his memory in oblivion. He was succeeded by Rainaldus, a monk of Clairvaux, and a man in whose hands Stephen rejoiced to leave his order. His work was now done upon earth, and his strength was fast sinking; he did not live many months after Rainaldus was elected. It is not known whether his illness was short or

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lingering, but the Exordium gives the following account of the death-bed of the man of God: "As the time approached when the old man lying on his bed was, after his labours were over, to be brought into the joy of the Lord, and from the lowest room of poverty, which he had chosen in the world, according to the counsel of our Saviour, was about to mount up to the banquet of the Father of the family on high, there met together, besides others, certain brethren, abbots of his order, to accompany by their most dutiful services and prayers, their faithful friend and most lowly father, thus on his way to his home. And when he was in his last agony, and was near death, the brethren began to talk together, and to call him blessed: being a man of such merit, they said that he could go securely to God, who had in his time brought so much fruit to the Church of God. He heard this, and gathering together his breath as he could, said with a half-reproachful voice, 'What is that ye are saying? Verily, I say to you, that I am going to God as trembling and anxious as if I had never done any good. For if there has been any good in me, and if any fruit has come forth through my littleness, it was through the help of the grace of God, and I fear and tremble much, lest perchance I have kept that grace less worthily and less humbly than I ought.' Beneath this shield of the perfect lowliness which sounded on his lips, and grew deep in his heart, he put off the old man, and putting aside in his might all the most wicked darts of the enemy, fiery and sulphurous though they were, he passed with ease the airy region of storms, and

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mounted up and was crowned at the gate of Paradise." It was on the 28th of March 1134, that Stephen quitted this weary life to join St. Robert and St. Alberic, whom he had so long survived. The 17th of April, on which his name occurs in the Martyrology, and which was his festival, was probably the day of his canonisation. His day is not now remembered amongst us; many will not even have heard of his name, and those who have heard of him may possibly be surprised to find that he was an Englishman. His eyes were probably never gladdened with a sight of the green fields of merry England, ever since he quitted his monastery of Sherborne to study at Paris. Yet his country may be proud to own this great saint. He was the spiritual father of St. Bernard, and was, it may be said, the principal founder of the *Order* of Cistercians. Before he died he had founded twenty monasteries of the line of Citeaux; the number of houses of the whole order was upwards of ninety. St. Stephen was in character a very Englishman; his life has that strange mixture of repose and of action which characterises England. Contemplative and ascetic as he was, he was still in his way a man of action; he had the head to plan, and the calm, unbending energy to execute a great work. His very countenance, if we may trust his contemporary the monk of Malmesbury, was English; he was courteous in speech, blithe in countenance, with a soul ever joyful in the Lord.[1] His order seems to have thriven in St. Stephen's native air; most

[1] Gesta Reg. Angl. lib. 4.

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of our great abbeys, Tintern, Reivaux, Fountains, Furness, and Netley, which are now known by their beautiful ruins, were Cistercian. The Order took to itself all the quiet nooks and valleys, and all the pleasant streams of old England, and gladdened the soul of the labourer by its constant bells. Its agricultural character was peculiarly suited to the country, though it took its birth beyond the seas. Doubtless St. Stephen, when he was working under the hot sun of France, often thought of the harvest moon and the ripe cornfields of his native land. May his prayers now be heard before the throne of grace for that dear country now lying under the wrath of God for the sins of its children. "Pray ye for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee." O Lord, our "eyes long sore for Thy word; oh, when wilt Thou comfort" us? "Comfort us again now after the time that Thou hast plagued us, and for the years wherein we have suffered adversity." "Then shall the earth bring forth her increase, and God, even our own God, shall give us His blessing."

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THE LIFE OF

ST. WILFRID

BISHOP OF YORK, A.D. 709

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Ever most affectionately
F. W. Faber

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THE LIFE OF

ST. WILFRID

To be striving to do good and to follow conscience, to be secretly sure that, with many miserable failures, we are doing God's work, and yet the while to be misunderstood, cruelly misinterpreted by persons whom we not only acknowledge to be good but indeed far better than ourselves—this is a cross which Saints have sometimes had to bear. It was St. Wilfrid's cross, and very heavily it pressed upon him. When St. Bernard persecuted St. William of York, the archbishop doubtless suffered greatly; yet he was no Saint then, and he could not have had that high clear consciousness that he was suffering for the cause of Christ and His Church, which St. Wilfrid might have. But it may be that St. William often pondered the story of his great predecessor, in many respects not unlike his own. This then forms part of the interest of St. Wilfrid's life to a reader, while it gives no little pain and perplexity to the writer. Here is a Saint misunderstood by Saints, persecuted by Saints, deposed by Saints as unworthy of the pontificate: truly a very fertile theme for the shallow criticisms of the children of

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the world: while to a Christian its lesson is that earth is not our home, that the balance of things is not righted till the Judgment, the oppressive mystery of the world not unriddled, the Church Militant not the Church Triumphant: a simple thing to say, yet involving more than most people put into the consideration.

Then another thing which makes St. Wilfrid's life interesting is its being, so to speak (for the language is hardly too strong), a new beginning for the Saxon Church, a new mission from Rome. Not only were the northern shires *almost* in overt schism about the Scottish usages, not only had rough-handed kings begun to tyrannise over the Church and even interfere in episcopal elections, but we are told that, after the death of St. Deusdedit, Wine, the bishop of the West Saxons, was the only canonically consecrated bishop in England, and he too afterwards guilty of fearful simony, and Wilfrid felt himself compelled to go to the Gallican bishops for consecration; and the course of the narrative will bring before us some lamentable instances of Erastian submission, and even of disgraceful misrule in ecclesiastical synods. But Rome carried the day in the person of St. Wilfrid. They wore him out with strife, calumny, and persecution; but his patience was indomitable, his energy unsleeping, and he finished his work, though he died in finishing it. Such was St. Wilfrid's office; let us see how he fulfilled it.

Of Wilfrid's parents nothing more is known than that they were noble. None of his three biographers mention his father's name or the place of his birth.

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The date seems to have been somewhere about 634, if that is not putting it too late. His birth was marked by a singular prodigy, which attracted people's attention to him, and made them divine what manner of child he was to be. At the moment of his birth a heavenly light enveloped the house, so that, to those without, it appeared as though it were in flames. His mother died while he was yet a child, and Fredegod relates that the fury of a step-mother rendered his home anything but peaceful; and in his thirteenth year, the boyish noble, already showing his ardent and fearless spirit, demanded of his father horses and armour and a retinue, and in this guise, as if he were playing at chivalry, young Wilfrid received the paternal blessing, turned his back upon his home, and proceeded in gay martial trappings to the court of King Oswy. He met with a kind or rather good-natured reception, and was soon wisely provided for by Queen Eanflede. It chanced that there was then at court an old noble named Cudda, whom a long palsy had weaned from the vanities of the world, and who was anxious to become a monk at Lindisfarne. To his care the queen commended young Wilfrid. Anything that was a change seems to have suited the boy equally well. Perhaps he was tired of his armour and retinue. However, he asked his father's leave to go to Lindisfarne, to which his father willingly consented, deeming such a wish in one so young to be probably an inspiration of Heaven. He resided some years among the monks, diligently pursuing his studies, and which is of far more importance, daily growing in chastity and other graces. His

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powers of mind were very great indeed; the psalter was quickly learned, and he made himself master of such other books as fell in his way. But he was so far from conceit or forwardness or thirst for praise that his obedience edified the whole community, and his humility was so lovely as to gain for him the affections of old and young. But, as St. Bede says, he was a clear-sighted youth, and that means a great deal in the mouth of the venerable historian.

In truth, amid the monks of Lindisfarne, in the very stronghold of Scottish usages, Wilfrid made a discovery, and that discovery gave the colour to his whole life. Whether he had fallen upon some old books, or from whatever cause, he began to suspect that there was a more perfect way of serving God; that there were ancient traditions of Catholic customs which it was most dangerous to slight, and yet which were utterly neglected. When once he had got this into his mind, he seized upon it and followed it out in that prescient way in which men who have a work to do are gifted to detect and pursue their master idea, without wasting themselves on collateral objects. Wilfrid pondered and pondered this discovery in his solitude, and he saw that the one thing to do was to go to Rome, and learn under the shadow of St. Peter's chair the more perfect way. To look Romeward is a Catholic instinct, seemingly implanted in us for the safety of the faith. Wilfrid does not appear to have made any secret of his difficulties, neither do the good monks seem to have been quite satisfied themselves that all was right. He acquainted them with his purpose of going to Rome to see what rites were followed by

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the churches and monasteries close to the Apostolic See. They not only approved his design, but exhorted him at once to put it into execution.

Wilfrid, leaving Lindisfarne, went to take counsel of his patroness Queen Eanflede, St. Edwin's daughter, whose baptism was such an interesting event in the history of the Northumbrian Church. The queen highly commended Wilfrid's intentions, and despatched him to Kent to King Erconbert, who was her relation, desiring him to send the youth to Rome. The Church of Canterbury was at that time governed by St. Honorius, a man who is described as being peculiarly well skilled in ecclesiastical matters. Here then was another field for the keen-eyed Wilfrid. But it was short of Rome. The process may be longer or shorter, but Catholics get to Rome at last, in spite of wind and tide. What he saw in Kent would only make him thirst more to approach as an ardent pilgrim the veritable metropolis of the Church, to pray at the tombs of the Apostles, and reverence the throne in the Lateran Cathedral, and honour the relics in the basilica of Holy Cross. Everybody who came across Wilfrid seems to have been struck with him, and not only so, but to have loved him also. King Erconbert probably had not as yet forwarded many pilgrims from the northern shires to Rome; it was a road untrodden by the English youth, says Eddi Stephani,—untrodden as yet; so that Wilfrid was singular in looking on such a pilgrimage as meritorious, and hoping to win pardon for the sins and ignorances of his youth in such a holy vicinity as the threshold of the Apostles. However this fresh,

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quick youth from the north seems to have astonished the Kentish king not a little. Prayer, fast, vigil, and reading made up the life of his young guest, so that Erconbert "loved him marvellously." Indeed, Wilfrid must have had a versatile mind, and certainly hesitated at nothing which enabled him to realise to himself communion with Rome. This strong feeling seems to be the key to almost everything he did. At Lindisfarne he had learned the psalter; but it was St. Jerome's improved version, generally used by the Gallican and German Churches of that day. At Canterbury he found the old version in use, as it stood before St. Jerome took the matter in hand. In fact it was used at Rome in preference to St. Jerome's version; this was enough for Wilfrid. He made all the haste he could to forget St. Jerome's version, and learn the old one. What a task it must have been! Learning the psalter by heart is plain work, even if it take some time and no little diligence; but to go on saying the hours for years, wearing the very inflexions of St. Jerome's version into his heart, and then to lay it aside, and learn a new version, and steer clear of his old remembrances during recitation,—this must have been an irksome task, and one which many would never have compassed at all. But it was a labour of love: it brought Wilfrid more into contact with Roman things. This was the Roman feeling in a little matter; but it was the same feeling, and no other, which was the life of his actions afterwards.

Erconbert detained the reluctant pilgrim for four long years in the Kentish court, and Wilfrid began

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to languish with the sickness of hope deferred. Meanwhile there arrived another young noble on his way to Rome. This was no other than Benedict Biscop. The king could now hardly defer his consent to Wilfrid's departure, and is said to have told St. Benedict to take him to Rome. From this it would appear that St. Benedict was the elder of the two: now we know he was only five and twenty when he made his first journey to Rome, so that Wilfrid must have been very young indeed when he left Lindisfarne, as he had resided four years with Erconbert. Wilfrid and St. Benedict travelled together as far as Lyons; and here begins another characteristic of St. Wilfrid's life. He and St. Benedict disagreed, and parted at Lyons. That there was nothing eccentric in Wilfrid's temper, no untoward projections in his character, one may infer from the love with which he seems to have inspired people generally. Yet there must have been something about him not easily come at, not readily understood or sympathised with, which must account for much that happened to him. That there was a quarrel seems clear from the somewhat ambiguous language of Eddi Stephani. "Affable to all, penetrating in mind, strong in body, *a quick walker*,[1] expert at all good works, *he never had a sour face;* but with alacrity and joy he travelled on to the city of Lyons; there he abode some time with his companions, his austere-minded leader departing from him, as Barnabas did from Paul because of John who was surnamed Mark." What this ex-

[1] Allegorically, he was a quick walker his whole life through.

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actly means, whether there was any John Mark, *i.e.* any bone of contention, in the case, or whether, as is usual with the writers of those ages, whose style is tesselated all over with Scripture vocabulary and allusions, the quarrel between two good men simply brought St. Paul and St. Barnabas to mind in the way of an analogy,—we confess we do not know. It is plain, however, that Wilfrid and Benedict separated at Lyons in some unpleasant way; and it may be that the objects of the two were not alike. St. Benedict seems to have wished to visit Rome, and did not want to linger by the way; while one of Wilfrid's professed objects was to visit and examine the chief monasteries on the road and study their discipline, an object which, later in life, became paramount with St. Benedict himself.

If the date of Benedict's first visit to Rome be correctly fixed to the year 653, then 634 obviously cannot be the date of Wilfrid's birth; for he was fourteen when he went to Lindisfarne, and he stayed four years in Kent; this would only leave him a year at Lindisfarne, whereas Bede distinctly says that he served God *some years* in that holy house. The chronology of St. Wilfrid's life is altogether very difficult to fix; and it is not at all pretended that the dates given here are really the true ones; an attempt has been made to ascertain the truth, but without any such special research as would have been beside the practical end for which the life was written.

St. Delphinus was archbishop of Lyons at the time when Wilfrid visited that city, and he would of course be provided with commendatory letters from

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St. Honorius to all the prelates whose dioceses lay in his road to Rome. The young pilgrim seems to have made the same favourable impression on the archbishop that he had done on so many others, and it is particularly mentioned that his bright face recommended him especially to Delphinus as betokening an inward purity and calmness. In a short time he became so much attached to Wilfrid that he proposed to adopt him, promised to give him his niece in marriage, and to obtain for him an important government in Gaul. "If you consent to this," said the archbishop, "you will find me ready to help you in all things just as a father." But much as the archbishop loved Wilfrid, he had not fathomed him; saint and martyr though he was, he did not see the tokens of Wilfrid's real character, his love of God, his burning zeal for the Church, his invincible singleness of purpose; else would he never have tempted him with the world. He imagined his guest to be a young Saxon noble, full of chivalry and devotion, high purposes and virginal purity. But Wilfrid comprehended that he was called to higher things than honourable wedlock and dignified magistracy, room though there was in these things to serve God and His Church. He refused the archbishop's kind offers. "I have vows," said he, "which I must pay to the Lord; I have left, like Abraham, my kindred and my father's house to visit the Apostolic See, and learn the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, that my country may make proof of them in God's service; and I would fain receive from God what He has promised to them that love Him, an hundredfold

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now, and then eternal life, for leaving father and mother, houses and lands. If it please God, I will see your face again on my return." The archbishop was of course too holy a man not to delight still more in Wilfrid, seeing in him such manifest proofs of a heavenly vocation. He detained him on the whole about a year at Lyons, and doubtless gave him much valuable instruction in the customs of the Church. Lyons and the banks of the Rhone are not without Christian antiquities and associations of a sort to make a deep impression on Wilfrid; and it would not escape him that Easter was celebrated after the Roman computation in the city of St. Irenæus, notwithstanding the vain plea of the Scots that they stood upon the tradition of St. John. At the beginning of the following year St. Delphinus allowed his guest to depart for Rome. The good archbishop had promised to be a father to Wilfrid, if he would accept his offers of worldly happiness and rank; would not the holy martyr feel still more a father's yearning heart to that heroic youth who with such gentle consistency put the bright things of the world aside, and went on his way hopefully and bravely?

As at Canterbury and Lyons, so at Rome Wilfrid distinguished himself by his genius for making friends. The archdeacon Boniface, who was secretary to St. Martin the Pope,[1] attached himself particularly to the young Englishman, and took as much delight in teaching him as if he had been his own son. Truly Rome was always a kind-hearted

[1] Mabillon asks, "An Eugenii ejus successoris?"

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city; the very hearth and home of Catholic hospitality; even in these days, if considerate kindness could do so *at Rome*, the very aliens are made to forget that they are aliens, and dream for that little while that they are sons. Is this craftiness? Yes; goodness was ever crafty, ever had a wily way of alluring what came near it. How happy Wilfrid must have been at Rome! We are told that he spent entire months in going from one holy place to another, not to see only, but to pray and perfect himself in the exercises of a spiritual life. His lot in Rome was the same which befalls most travellers who go there for religious ends and spend their time in a religious way. Will it be thought superstitious to say that to such persons it almost invariably happens that there is something or other of a mysterious kind in the occurrences which befall them there, something new, strange, unaccountable, provided only they are searching after heavenly things? As if that city were instinct with a sort of preternatural energy, and that virtue went from it, either to heal or hurt, according to the faith of him who touched, we read that Rome made Petrarch almost an infidel; and Luther, to say the best, had his infidelity corroborated by his visit to the Catholic capital, because of the sins, the pride, luxury, and corruption there.

> Mysterious Rome! thy very ills are fraught
> With somewhat of thy fearful destiny,
> So that the vision of thy sins hath wrought
> Even like a curse within the passer-by.
> Here gazed of old with no religious eye
> Petrarch the worldling, here the Apostate Monk
> Came ere his fall; and when they saw how nigh
> Good lay to evil, their base spirits shrunk

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As from a touchstone which could bring to light
Unworthy natures that must walk by sight
Through lack of trust :—and thus are sceptics made
By that half-faith which seeks for good unbound
From ill ; and hearts are daily wanting found,
Upon the balance of that problem weighed.

This is the dark side of the picture. But to say nothing of other shrines where relics repose and spots where holy influences abide, who shall reach even by conjecture to the number and extent of visions seen, prayers answered, vows suggested, lives changed, great ends dreamed, endeavoured after, accomplished, inspirations, or something very like them, given to the listening heart ?—who shall imagine the number and extent of these things vouchsafed at one place only, the low banisters with their coronal of starry lights round the confession of St. Peter and St. Paul, where rich and poor kneel and say Augustine's prayer, or breathe their own secret wants and wishes ? It cannot be too strong a thing to say that no one ever went to Rome without leaving it a better or a worse man than he was, with a higher or a harder heart. However this may be, it is certain that something strange occurred to Wilfrid at Rome, something just of the same sort that we hear of so frequently in these days, or which some of us may have actually experienced.

He approached Rome, his biographer tells us, in the same spirit in which St. Paul approached Jerusalem, full of a diffident anxiety lest he should have run in vain. He sought it as a legitimate fountain of Catholic teaching, desiring to measure

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and compare his English faith with it, and prepared to abandon whatever was opposed to the doctrine, spirit, or usage of Rome. He went to a church dedicated to St. Andrew, or rather an oratory, such as was not a parish church, but served by occasional priests. It appears to have been one of the earliest places he visited. There on the top of the altar was a copy of the four blessed Gospels; before this Wilfrid knelt down humbly, and prayed to God through the merits of His holy martyr St. Andrew that He would grant him the power of reading the book aright, and of preaching "the eloquence of the evangelists" to the people. From certain circumstances, more or less singular, Wilfrid was led to connect the unexpected friendship and instruction of the archdeacon Boniface with this prayer; and he seems to have told his biographer Eddi, the precentor of Canterbury, that he gained that friend through God and the Apostle. Boniface not only instructed him in the interpretation of the Gospels, but taught him the paschal computation, and dictated to him the rules of ecclesiastical discipline. When Wilfrid's visit drew near a close, Boniface presented him to the Pope, laying open to his Holiness the cause of his journey and how strangely and perseveringly he had accomplished it; whereupon St. Martin, laying his hand on the young Englishman's head, dismissed him with blessing and prayer; and so Wilfrid turned his back on Rome, or rather carried Rome away with him in his heart.

Wilfrid had now a long road to traverse; yet he had a home nearer than England, even the

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palace of the archbishop of Lyons. Whether the young traveller left Rome by the Porto del Popolo and went straight to the Ponte Molle, or whether he left it by the Porto degli Angeli, the gate of the Saxon Borgo, and so skirted the Tiber under Monte Mario, he would have abundant matter for meditation as he wended to Viterbo over the tawny pastures of the Campagna. This was his first visit to Rome; he was going to embrace the ecclesiastical state in England; how unlikely that he should ever visit Rome again! He had nothing to carry away with him but reminiscences of profit and pleasure. He little thought how often the Eternal City must be approached by him, how he must sit in councils, plead his cause before synods and congregations, carry to the feet of popes a load of weary wrongs and vexing calumnies and iniquitous oppressions, how the hands of kings and archbishops should be heavy on him, and that in fear of life, he should escape beyond seas, avoid the daggers of assassins and the conspiracies of monarchs, and seek refuge at the very tomb of St. Peter and St. Paul where the ardours of his youthful imagination had drunk and been satisfied in joyous pilgrimages. Rome had been the dream of his boyhood; he had sought it, found it, and thought he had done with it. But it was not so: the word, the thought, the thing—they were to be by his sick-bed at Meaux, they were to be by his death-bed at Oundle. Ah! so it is with all of us; we have dreams, and they are other than we expected, and they haunt us through life, and go with us to the grave, like Wilfrid's Rome.

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At Lyons, Wilfrid received a most affectionate welcome from the archbishop, who made him give a detailed narrative of all that had befallen him at Rome, and all that he saw, and all that he learned, and bade him show him the relics wherewith Wilfrid was returning enriched to his own country. He remained with St. Delphinus three years (some say six), and from him received the clerical tonsure, St. Peter's tonsure, as it was called; for even in this matter St. Wilfrid was still obstinately bent on Romanising. The Scottish tonsure, called by the witty malice of the Romans the tonsure of Simon Magus, was "a semicircle shaved from ear to ear above the forehead, not reaching to the hinder part, which was covered with hair." It does not appear that any symbolical meaning was attached to this tonsure; it was one of the Scottish usages to which they clung almost as fondly as to their Easter reckoning. They do not seem to have had any oriental tradition for this custom, for the Eastern tonsure, sometimes called the tonsure of St. Paul, consisted in shaving the whole head, and this was used in some Western monasteries.[1] But the tonsure of St. Peter went all round the head, and was a professed symbol of the Crown of Thorns, a solemn emblem setting forth the consecration of the person so marked and separated from the children of the world. This was the tonsure which Wilfrid now received at the hands of St. Delphinus. The longer Wilfrid stayed at Lyons the more necessary he seemed to the archbishop, who again proposed

[1] Alban Butler.

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adopting him and making him his heir, dropping all mention of the marriage.

It would seem by the style of the good precentor of Canterbury, that Wilfrid had become so devoted to foreign usages that he might possibly have been tempted to remain at Lyons. But, as he says, God wished something better to our nation than that Wilfrid should stay there. It is not our business to enter into the causes of the cruel martyrdom of St. Delphinus. A persecution[1] was raised against the Church, or at least the bishops who held with St. Leger of Autun, by Ebroin, the mayor of the palace, and nine bishops were put to death, and Wilfrid's host among them. There was one strife, only one, between Delphinus and his English guest; he forbade Wilfrid to follow him to his martyrdom, and Wilfrid would not obey. "What is better," said he, "than for father and son to die together? to be with Christ together?" So he went with him to the scene of his passion. First the archbishop with holy intrepidity suffered martyrdom; then Wilfrid was stripped, and was standing ready, the martyr's crown hard by him; but another martyrdom than that was reserved for him; weariness, disquiet, thwarted purposes, harsh misunderstandings, strife, exile, poverty, disgrace—these were to be the jewels of his crown. While he stood ready, some of the captains cried out, "Who is that beautiful youth who is now preparing himself for death?" It was

[1] See Michelet, Hist. de France, i. 273, and Butler's Life of St. Leodegarius. Some writers have carelessly attributed this persecution to St. Bathildis, the foundress of Corbie and Chelles, an Englishwoman.

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answered that he was from beyond seas, an Englishman. "Spare him then," was the reply. Eddi Stephani scarcely knows whether to rejoice at Wilfrid's escape,[1] or to sorrow for his missing of the crown; but at any rate, as he observes, he was like St. John at the Latin gate, when plunged in the boiling oil; he was a confessor ready, nay eager, for martyrdom, and that he was not actually a martyr was of God's Providence, not of his own backwardness.

By some means or other Wilfrid got possession of his master's body, and satisfied his affectionate reverence by procuring for it an honourable and Christian interment. The place of his martyrdom was Châlons-sur-Saone. After the burial of St. Delphinus, Wilfrid appears to have returned home without any further delay: let us cast an eye over the scene of his future labours. Oswy was at this time the King of the Northumbrians. His two sons, Egfrid and Alfrid, seem to have been admitted by him as partners in the sovereignty, and are by Bede and others called kings, even while their father lived. It is said by some that Wilfrid had been acquainted with Alfrid before he left England, and had inspired him with the same sentiments of devotedness to Rome which so distinguished himself. If this be true, he can hardly have been connected with Alfrid as his tutor, as some say; but while at Lindisfarne he may have been selected for his high birth and intelligence as an occasional companion of the prince. One thing however is

[1] Peck, in his History of Stamford, makes Wilfrid only twenty-four or twenty-five years old at the time of this event. St. Delphinus is commonly honoured in France under the name of St. Chaumont.

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beyond a doubt, that Alfrid was noted for his preference of Roman usages, while Oswy was almost a bigot to the observances of the Scots. It was from Coenwalch, king of the West Saxons, that Alfrid heard of Wilfrid's landing in England, and how perfectly he had learned at Rome the veritable Catholic practices in all things. He at once sent for Wilfrid, and looking on him as a pilgrim recently come from the Eternal City and as it were the representative of Rome, he flung himself at his feet and asked a blessing from him. Alfrid seems to have been never weary of conversing with Wilfrid about the discipline of the Roman Church, and doubtless what St. Wilfrid had to say, specially of the wonderful rule of St. Benedict, spurred the ardent prince to the munificence which he soon displayed in the matter of monastic foundations.

It so happened at this time that Lincolnshire, the territory of the South Mercians, was under the power of the Northumbrian king. The South Mercians did not form an integral part of his kingdom, as the Mercians north of the Trent did; but Oswy was lord paramount beyond the Trent, governing by lieutenants. After he had defeated the cruel Penda he governed his kingdom three years by Northumbrian governors; after which he appointed Peada king[1] of the South Mercians, incorporating with Northumbria the seven thousand families of Mercians which dwelt on the north bank of the Trent. Peada had sought in marriage

[1] Peada was made king in 658: the Saxon Chronicle says in 655; this is certainly inaccurate.

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Alcfleda the daughter of Oswy. She had been denied him on account of his being an unbeliever; but by the conversation of his friend Alfrid he became at length a convert to the faith, and was baptized by Bishop Finan at Wallsend near Newcastle, and returned home, taking with him four missionary priests whose preaching Penda did not forbid, though his own heart was never surrendered to the Gospel. One of these priests, Diuma, was consecrated bishop. The Northumbrian and Mercian royal families were united by another marriage, for Alfrid married Kyneburga, one of Penda's daughters, by which he became brother-in-law to Peada. Notwithstanding these marriages, war broke out,[1] Penda was defeated, and Peada after three years raised to be one of Oswy's vassal-kings; for we are told that Oswy did in fact rule the whole Heptarchy, being, according to Speed, the tenth "monarch of all the Englishmen." This statement of a very perplexed history seemed necessary in order to account for Alfrid's influence in Lincolnshire.

Anxious then to see the result of Wilfrid's travels brought to bear in a real way, Alfrid, either with Peada's consent or by Oswy's authority, gave him the land of ten families on the river Welland at Stamford, in Lincolnshire,[2] wherewith to found a

[1] The story that Alfrid rebelled against his father, and fought on the side of Penda, though received by Father Cressy, seems quite unfounded.

[2] Peck's arguments in favour of the Lincolnshire Stamford seem unanswerable; the neighbourhood of Caistor, the foundation of Peterborough, and Wilfrid's having a house at Oundle, may be added as completing the evidence.

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monastery, which was a cell in honour of St. Leonard, the hermit of Limoges. It was under the abbey of Durham, though so far off; Wilfrid's connection with Lindisfarne may account for that. In after ages a rent was paid from its revenues to the abbot of Croyland in return for giving up to Durham the abbey of Coldingham, which, equally distant the other way, belonged to Croyland. It is interesting to add that, in the very year in which Oswy raised Peada to the rank of a vassal-king, he and Peada met and determined jointly to found a monastery in honour of Christ and St. Peter. This was done; the foundation was made not many miles from Stamford, on the edge of the fens near Croyland, at a place called Medehampstead: this was the beginning of Peterborough Abbey. Wilfrid's abbey of St. Leonard at Stamford was rebuilt in a sumptuous manner at the joint expense of William the Conqueror and William Kairliph, bishop of Durham.[1]

Wilfrid was now beginning to realise his dreams; for into his new monastery he introduced the rule of St. Benedict. It is not our business to enter into the question of St. Augustine's introduction of that rule into England; the monastic houses of the northern shires were from the first Scottish, and were established chiefly under the episcopate of St. Aidan. The rule therefore which prevailed in them was either the ancient Irish rule or that reform of it called the Rule of St. Columban; and it seems an undoubted fact that in the *north* of

[1] It was not before the reign of William that it was dedicated under St. Leonard's name.

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England at least the Rule of St. Benedict was introduced by St. Wilfrid. It was part, and a chief part, of his whole system; in fact, the great means to the one end towards which he steadily bent his whole energies, the reduction of the Northumbrian Church to Catholic unity. This is a very interesting subject, but there is nothing more perplexing in monastic antiquities, and we cannot pretend to the various erudition requisite for handling it properly. Yet it is so intimately connected with the life of St. Wilfrid, being a principal feature of that old state of things, to the extinction of which he devoted himself, that we may be allowed to say a little about it.

The Rule of St. Benedict has been to previous monastic institutions almost like a deluge. It has well-nigh obliterated all vestiges of them, so that a clear view of them (so far as the West is concerned) is now impossible. Some have accused the partisans of Roman usages of fraudulently destroying most of the works of St. Columban; some of them, however, were found in the fifteenth century at Besançon and Bobbio, and were carried to the libraries of Rome and Milan. Of his rule enough is known to enable us to institute a very striking contrast between it and that of St. Benedict. The Benedictines maintain that it was the same to all intents and purposes, and it is a hardy thing to contradict Mabillon[1] on a matter of monastic history; but when the nuns ask St. Donatus, bishop of Besançon and disciple of Columban, to

[1] Yet Mabillon himself distinguishes between the Rule and the Institute.

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get them three rules that they may compare them, namely, the Rules of Cæsarius of Arles, Benedict, and Columban, it is plain some difference existed between them. The Bollandists again say that in their similarity and diversity the two rules may be compared to those of the Franciscans and Dominicans; this comparison certainly lays hold of the distinctive characteristics of both, yet is hardly fair to the modern orders. Putting aside then all consideration of the spiritual and mystic wisdom in both rules (for Saints composed them, and we must look on such things very far off), we may institute an historical contrast between the two, which will help us better to appreciate what St. Wilfrid's work was, and how he did it. The Irish Rule, confining ourselves to the children of its reform, produced St. Gall, St. Magnus, St. Theodore, St. Attalus, St. Romaric, St. Omer, St. Bertin, St. Amand, St. Wandrille, and others; let this be enough to show how wonderful it was as a discipline for Saints; ours is a lower view of the matter.

No one can look into the Rule of St. Benedict without seeing that it is a code by which a mighty empire could almost be governed; it is full of magnificent principles and almost miraculous foresight; its characteristics are consistency of purpose, a large-hearted view of the capabilities of human nature, and a sort of grandeur which seems to descend into its very details and fill them with practical life. This is what may be said of the Benedictine Rule simply considered as a fact in the history of civilisation. But what is still more striking is its want of stiffness and of rigid for-

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malism—in short, its pliability; this it is which enabled it to do what it has done for the Church, and like a Gothic cathedral, to receive numerous modifications and additions, and even some retrenchments, and yet to remain obviously, indisputably, cognisably the same Benedictine Rule. This is, so to speak, the *idiosyncrasy* of the rule. It gives it a trustfulness which makes it a thing men can work with for ever. This is just the one thing wanting in the Rule of St. Columban; it has no pliability, no trustfulness; it did not dare to commit itself to the responsible agency of superiors; to make itself over in faith to the keeping of holy obedience. It was a *written thing*, and could advance no further; it remained a written thing, and grew to nothing else. This might be very curiously illustrated by the penances prescribed. Nothing seems left to the discretion of the abbot, not the most trivial matters. For the monk who forgets to say *Amen* after grace, or sign the cross on his spoon or lantern, who spills his beer, who hits the table with his knife, who coughs while intoning the psalms, and sundry other things, the number of lashes even, as well as days of penance, are fixed, and are unalterable. The abbot has no discretion; there is no weighing of circumstance or comparing of occasions allowed to him. It is a minute, burdensome, obstinate, cumbrous code, that is, treating it as an historical document. These characteristics run through it, full as it is of many touching disclosures of deep spiritual wisdom—such as the law which enjoins a penance on any monk relating a sin of which he has already repented, and in repentance

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sacramental confession is included, as by so doing he risks the dangerous awakening of past temptations.[1]

Now such a rule, with such sacred wisdom and yet with such practical deficiencies, is precisely what might have been divined before as likely to come from the Irish or Scottish Church. Where a centre of unity was not acknowledged, there could be no trustfulness; it would not be safe to be trustful, but it would be wise to be suspicious. That Church is described by a French historian as animated by an "indomitable spirit of individuality and opposition." With much that was high and holy, there was a fierceness, an opinionated temper, an almost unconscious attitude of irritable defence—in theological language, a dislike of Rome, which is quite fatal to the formation of a Catholic temper either in a community or in an individual. Without fancifulness, all this may be traced more or less in the lineaments of St. Columban's Rule; it is a portrait of the Church which gave it birth. Let us simply enumerate a few of the peculiarities of the Irish Church: there was the paschal cycle, the tonsure,

[1] Mr. Dunham, in his History of the Middle Ages, has been more just to the Saints than most modern writers in England. But it is a random way of writing history to throw out without particular references such statements as the following: that the Scottish monks were not stationary like the Benedictines, but vagabonds—that their abbots were only in priests' orders, yet consecrated bishops, and were considered as the superiors of bishops—that the Anglo-Saxons would never have recognised holiness unless joined with high birth—that the history of the Universal Church affords, so far as he knows, no instance of a deacon being allowed to preach (St. Ephrem is a famous instance), and many other such assertions. In spite of his erudition, this inaccurate rashness makes him an unsafe guide.

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the baptizing of rich people's children[1] in milk, the frequent marriage of bishops, even married monks with their wives and children claiming a share of what was offered at the altar; these were the things which grouped themselves round the denial of the Roman centre of unity. The monastic rule of this Church was the stronghold of the system, for it happened at that time that its spirituality, which is its strength, was mainly among the monks. St. Benedict's Rule was the weapon which Wilfrid took to fight down the Rule of St. Columban.

The characteristics of St. Columban's Rule, as representing the *temper* of the Celtic Church and civilisation, are the more striking, inasmuch as the genius and disposition of its author were singularly opposed to the hardness and inflexibility of his rule. He was a poet, and his works are described as being remarkable "for imagination, energetic painting, and burning zeal," which we should not have at all expected from the author of such a rule: its uncompromising application of principles is only what we should look for from what we know of the history of that stern rebuker of wickedness in high places. Otherwise the difference between the temper of the rule and the genius of its author shows very strongly the justice of the view which would regard the rule as the natural growth and representation of the Celtic spirit. It may be true that Yepes, in his "Coronica General de la Orden de San Benito," is guilty of an anachronism of twenty years in ascribing the cause of St.

[1] Carpentier Suppl. Gloss. Ducange, t. i. p. 30, ap. Michelet i. 263, n. 4.

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Columban's departure from Britain to the preaching of St. Augustine and his companions, as *Roman* missionaries, yet the mistake shows how vividly the Benedictine historian realised the antagonism between the two rules. As persons nowadays really do not know what asceticism is, and might with an easy ignorance conclude from what has been said that St. Columban was an excessive formalist, we will in justice to the blessed Saint quote one passage of his writings from the historian cited above.[1] "Let us not suppose," says St. Columban, in the second of his instructions, "that to fatigue the dirt of our bodies with fastings and vigils will avail us, without a reformation of manners. To macerate the flesh, without corresponding benefit to the soul, is like cultivating ground which can never yield fruit: it is like constructing a statue, without all gold, within all mud. Why carry the war outside the gates, if the enclosure is a prey to ruin? What should we say of a man who cleansed his vine all around, yet inwardly suffered it to be consumed by vermin and weeds? A religion of bodily gestures and motions is vain; vain is bodily suffering, vain the care which we take of our outward man, if we do not also superintend and cleanse the inward. True piety consists in humility, not of body, but of heart. Of what avail are the combats which the servant wages with the passions, when these passions live in peace with the master? Nor is it sufficient to hear and read of virtue. Will mere words cleanse a man's house from filth? Can a daily task be accomplished without labour and sweat of the brow? Wherefore

[1] Vol. ii. p. 187.

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gird on your armour: he who does not valiantly fight can never obtain the crown."

Of course nothing which has been said can be construed into disparagement of the blessed Saints who came forth out of that ecclesiastical system, neither is it meant to assert that the Scots were in overt schism. Indeed there is a very good negative evidence[1] to show that St. Columban did himself receive at length the Roman computation for Easter. But the matter, if deeply examined, does put on a most serious aspect, much more serious than any Church historians seem to be aware of. It is not too much to say that through the influence of the Scottish Church and of the Celtic civilisation of which Ireland was the centre, Christendom approached to the very verge of a tremendous schism, almost reaching in extent to the unhappy sacrilege of the sixteenth century. Ireland, Scotland, the northern shires[2] of England, Bavaria, Belgium, part of Switzerland, all France north of the Loire, with portions of Germany, were impregnated with the spirit of the Scotch Church, traversed by Celtic missionaries, peopled with Celtic monasteries, and accustomed to send their young men to be educated in Irish colleges; in fact, Ireland was a great centre of ecclesiastical civilisation, and its temper was vehemently opposed to that of Rome. In many little ways we may trace the Celtic spirit growing and pushing forward, disclosing itself more and more, getting consistency through an increasing consciousness of its own strength, until a

[1] Namely, the silence of the Italian monks in the Council of Macon.
[2] *Perhaps* the midland also.

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schism seemed actually threatening. It pleased God of His mercy to interpose. The Roman mission of St. Gregory to the Saxons appears in this point of view like an inspiration; the energy of the Roman system began to develop itself close by the threshold of the Celtic Church, and ultimately absorbed it, without persecution or destruction. What the Roman mission did for the British Isles, the Carlovingians did for France, Belgium, and Bavaria: it was their policy, their evident *line*, to use a familiar word, to attach themselves to the Pope, and to identify themselves with the Roman movement, just as Clothaire and Dagobert were partisans of the Irish system. But what was the worldly policy of the Carlovingians was something of far deeper import to the welfare of the Church; it was overruled to the absorbing of the rival system into the system of Rome; and so health was restored to the whole of western Christendom. Now supposing this not to be an exaggerated view of the state of things, we may perceive the real importance of the Scottish usages above and beyond their seemingly trivial formalism; and further, we can fix more accurately the precise place which St. Wilfrid occupies in English church history. The Celtic feeling, Celtic rule, Celtic usages, had risen like a flood over the traces of St. Paulinus's holy work. The bishops and the monks were the children of Iona, and the people might well follow them, for they were veritable Saints. Wilfrid was the Augustine of the northern shires: in him Rome gave battle to the opposing spirit in one of its chief strongholds, and prevailed. And it pleased God

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that he who had this lofty mission to fulfil should also be a great and blessed Saint.

Wilfrid does not appear to have remained long at Stamford. His early associations bound him to the north, and it was there his sphere of action lay. Some time before this, and probably during Wilfrid's absence abroad, Alfrid had founded a monastery at Ripon in Yorkshire, in which he was now anxious to bring about a reform; in other words to compel the Scottish monks to adopt the Roman usages. But they resisted, and preferred to surrender the place rather than forego their hereditary customs. Alfrid bestowed the monastery with its endowment upon Wilfrid. But he was anxious to have the Saint for his spiritual director, and endeavoured to have him ordained priest. Agilbert, the bishop of Dorchester, and afterwards bishop of Paris, happened to be resident in his court at that time, and to him Alfrid made application. The history of Agilbert has some singular points of resemblance to that of Wilfrid. Holy man as he was, he became distasteful to King Kenwalch because of the foreign accent with which he pronounced Saxon, and further from his occasionally preaching or speaking in French, which the king did not understand. Kenwalch, unable to drive Agilbert from his see, arbitrarily divided the bishopric, created the new see of Winchester, and appointed to it Bishop Wine, who had been consecrated abroad. The whole action shows in what peril the rights and liberties of the Saxon Church then stood, and what an urgent call there was for a vigorous resistance to such a debasing tyranny. It

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is painfully instructive to remember that Wine, the obtruded bishop, was the father of simony in England: surely this is a pregnant fact. Agilbert very properly refused to sanction an ecclesiastical change in which the Church had not been consulted, and he was in consequence obliged to retire from the dominions of Kenwalch. The persecuted bishop fled first to the court of Alfrid, and after some stay there, during which he helped forward the Roman movement, he went into France, and was ultimately made bishop of Paris.

Alfrid told Agilbert that Wilfrid had but lately come from Rome, and that he was a person of singular merit, learned yet humble, docile but plain-spoken, kind-hearted but with a practical authoritative way about him, calculated to influence persons extremely. Agilbert replied that such a man ought rather to be a bishop than a priest, and his words were probably not without weight in the mind of Alfrid, and shortly brought forth fruit. Wilfrid's ordination took place either in 662 or 663; and we read that as abbot of Ripon he was noticed for his extreme humility, his bodily austerities and long prayers, but above all for his goodness to the widow and the orphan. Meanwhile he was not without business of an external kind. Whether it was that ecclesiastics consulted him or that Alfrid acted on his advice in matters connected with the Church, we read that his fame for expertness in such things spread far and wide. In 664 an occurrence took place which brought him out upon the stormy scene of action. Henceforth Wilfrid has no private life; nothing but the Lord's "Quiescite

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pusillum," from time to time resorted to for his soul's health, the chief schoolhouse of the Saints, but of whose secrets history has nothing to reveal.

The year 664 was a very eventful one in the history of the Saxon Church, and that for many reasons. Our attention is chiefly called to the Council of Whitby, the part Wilfrid took in it, and the decision come to with regard to the Scottish and Roman usages, particularly in reference to the observation of Easter. A few words may be necessary on this subject. The error of the Quartodecimans, condemned by the Nicene Council, consisted in following the custom of the Jews: thus, Easter might or might not fall on a Sunday, being invariably the fourteenth day of the first lunar month nearest the spring equinox. Now, it is inaccurate to call the Scots Quartodecimans, though it is by no means uncommon to do so. They always kept Easter on a Sunday, and only on the fourteenth day of the Quartodecimans when it chanced to be a Sunday. The Scotch calculation was erroneous, and their practice not in harmony with that of the Catholic Church; yet they ran counter to no formally expressed decision of the Church, and therefore were not overtly schismatics, though on the verge of schism, as nonconformity ever is at its best state. The Scotch difference, then, was not a light one, for it infringed the sacred unity of the Church; and by assuming an attitude of opposition to the great body of Christendom, it must certainly—the more certainly because of the simply ritual character of the eccentric usage—produce an uncatholic temper in the section of the

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Church where it prevailed. The greatness and the littleness of matters connected with the Church depend in no slight measure upon the love wherewith the men of any particular age regard the sanctities of the Catholic faith; and this is a sufficient answer, in passing, to the shallow sneers which the vehemence of the paschal controversy provokes in men not habituated to meditation on the Lord's Passion, or the sweet strictness of the Lent fast, and who therefore disesteem the solemn joy of Easter wherein the Communion of Saints is so aptly and so deeply realised.

The history of the sundry attempts made to introduce the Roman usage may be thus briefly sketched.[1] The first was that of St. Augustine, and this was followed by a treatise of Cummian, a Scotch monk, who had joined himself to the Roman movement, and wrote an elaborate letter to Segienus, abbot of Iona, to justify his conduct. When St. Finan succeeded St. Aidan in the see of Lindisfarne, Ronan, a Scotch monk, educated in France or Italy, mooted the question again among the monks of Lindisfarne, and that too with considerable effect, though he failed in persuading the bishop. Doubtless it was the sensation produced by Ronan, which created the willingness shown by the monks when Wilfrid expressed his doubts in the monastery, and proposed his journey to Rome. The fourth raising of the question fell in the year 664 at the very Council of Whitby in whose proceedings Wilfrid took a leading part.

[1] Mabillon, Præf. in Sæc. iii. Ben. sect. i.

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The Council took place in the early part of the year, as is proved by the brief episcopate of Tuda. The Scotch party was represented by St. Hilda, the abbess of Whitby; Bishop Colman and his clergy, Bishop Cedd, and King Oswy: the Roman party by bishop Agilbert, the priests Agatho and Wilfrid; James, the deacon of St. Paulinus, a most venerable man surely in the sight of the Council as witnessing to the first conversion of the country; Romanus, a Kentish priest, who had come into the north with the queen Eanflede, and finally by King Alfrid. St. Cedd appears to have acted as interpreter when necessary. It was a solemn day for the north when all these Saints met at Whitby in council, with no less an end before them than a reverential seeking for Catholic unity on the one hand, and a laudable jealousy for the sacredness of hereditary religion on the other. Wilfrid's heart beat high that day; how had he laboured for this end, as well as dreamed of it! His travels, his learning, his actions, seemed to concentre here; the question was, so to speak, in an assailable position, capable of being brought to a practical decision. The actual narrative we cannot do better than give in St. Bede's own words.[1]

"King Oswy first observed that it behoved those who served one God to observe the same rule of life; and as they all expected the same kingdom in heaven, so they ought not to differ in the celebration of the Divine mysteries, but rather to inquire which was the truest tradition, that the same might be followed by all. He then commanded his bishop

[1] Lib. iii. c. 25.

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Colman first to declare what the custom was which he observed, and whence it derived its origin. Then Colman said, 'The Easter which I keep, I received from my elders, who sent me bishop hither. All our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have kept it after the same manner; and that the same may not seem to any contemptible or worthy to be rejected, it is the same which St. John the evangelist, the disciple beloved of our Lord, with all the Churches over which he presided, is recorded to have observed.' Having said thus much, and more to the like effect, the king commanded Agilbert to show whence his custom of keeping Easter was derived, or on what authority it was grounded. Agilbert answered, 'I desire that my disciple, the priest Wilfrid, may speak in my stead; because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better explain our opinion in the English language than I can by an interpreter.'

"Then Wilfrid, being ordered by the king to speak, delivered himself thus: 'The Easter which we observe we saw celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed apostles Peter and Paul taught, suffered, and were buried; we saw the same done in Italy and in France, when we travelled through those countries for pilgrimage and prayer. We find the same practised in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and all the world, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad, through several nations and tongues at one and the same time; except only these and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean

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the Picts and the Britons, who foolishly, in these two remote islands of the world, and only in part even of them, oppose all the rest of the universe.' When he had so said, Colman answered, 'It is strange that you will call our labours foolish, wherein we follow the example of so great an apostle, who was thought worthy to lay his head on our Lord's bosom, when all the world knows him to have lived most wisely.' Wilfrid replied, 'Far be it from us to charge John with folly, for he literally observed the precepts of the Jewish law, whilst the Church judaised in many points, and the apostles were not able at once to cast off all the observances of the law which had been instituted by God: as it is necessary that all who come to the faith should forsake the idols which were invented by devils, that they might not give scandal to the Jews that were among the Gentiles. For this reason it was that Paul circumcised Timothy, that he offered sacrifice in the temple, that he shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth, for no other advantage than to avoid giving scandal to the Jews. Hence it was that James said to the same Paul, You see, brother, how many thousands of the Jews have believed; and they are all zealous for the law. And yet, at this time, the Gospel spreading throughout the world, it is needless—nay, it is not lawful—for the faithful either to be circumcised, or to offer up to God sacrifices of flesh. So John, pursuant to the custom of the law, began the celebration of the feast of Easter on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, not regarding whether the

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same happened on a Saturday, or any other day. But, when Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that our Lord arose from the dead and gave the world the hopes of resurrection on the first day after the Sabbath, he understood that Easter ought to be observed, so as always to stay till the rising of the moon on the fourteenth day of the first moon, in the evening, according to the custom and precepts of the law, even as John did. And when that came, if the Lord's day (then called the first day after the Sabbath) was the next day, he began that very evening to keep Easter, as we all do at this day. But if the Lord's day did not fall the next morning after the fourteenth moon, but on the sixteenth, or the seventeenth, or any other moon till the twenty-first, he waited for that, and on the Saturday before, in the evening, began to observe the holy solemnity of Easter. Thus it came to pass, that Easter Sunday was only kept from the fifteenth moon to the twenty-first. Nor does this evangelical and apostolic tradition abolish the law, but rather fulfil it; the command being to keep the passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty-first moon of the same month, in the evening; which observance all the successors of St. John in Asia, since his death, and all the Church throughout the world, have since followed: and that this is the true Easter, and the only one to be kept by the faithful, was not newly decreed by the Council of Nice, but only confirmed afresh, as the Church history informs us. Thus it appears that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you imagine,

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nor that of Peter, whose traditions you knowingly contradict; and that you neither agree with the law nor the Gospel in the keeping of your Easter. For John, keeping the Paschal time according to the decree of the Mosaic law, had no regard to the first day after the Sabbath, which you do not practise, who celebrate Easter only on the first day after the Sabbath. Peter kept Easter Sunday between the fifteenth and the twenty-first moon, which you do not, but keep Easter Sunday from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; so that you often begin Easter on the thirteenth moon in the evening, whereof neither the law made any mention; nor did our Lord, the author and giver of the Gospel, on that day, but on the fourteenth, either eat the old passover in the evening, or deliver the sacraments of the New Testament, to be celebrated by the Church, in memory of His Passion. Besides, in your celebration of Easter, you utterly exclude the twenty-first moon, which the law ordered to be principally observed. Thus, as I said before, you agree neither with John nor Peter, nor with the law, nor the Gospel, in the celebration of the greatest festival.'

"To this Colman rejoined, 'Did Anatolius, a holy man, and much commended in Church history, act contrary to the law and the Gospel, when he wrote that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth? Is it to be believed that our most reverend father Columba, and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, thought or acted contrary to the Divine writings? Whereas there were many among them,

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whose sanctity is testified by heavenly signs and the working of miracles, whose life, customs, and discipline I never cease to follow, not questioning their being Saints in heaven.'

"'It is evident,' said Wilfrid, 'that Anatolius was a most holy, learned, and commendable man; but what have you to do with him, since you do not observe his decrees? For he, following the rule of truth in his Easter, appointed a revolution of nineteen years, which either you are ignorant of, or, if you know it, though it is kept by the whole Church of Christ, yet you despise it. He so computed the fourteenth moon in the Easter of our Lord, that according to the custom of the Egyptians, he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth moon in the evening; so in like manner he assigned the twentieth to Easter Sunday, as believing that to be the twenty-first moon, when the sun had set; which rule and distinction of his it appears you are ignorant of, in that you sometimes keep Easter before the full of the moon, that is, on the thirteenth day. Concerning your father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rules and precepts you observe, which have been confirmed by signs from heaven, I may answer, that when many on the day of judgment shall say to our Lord, that in His Name they prophesied and cast out devils, and wrought many wonders, our Lord will reply that He never knew them. But far be it from me that I should say so of your fathers, because it is much more just to believe what is good than what is evil of persons whom one does not know. Wherefore I do not

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deny those to have been God's servants, and beloved by Him, who with rustic simplicity, but pious intentions, have themselves loved Him. Nor do I think that such keeping of Easter was very prejudicial to them, as long as none came to show them a more perfect rule; and yet I do believe that they, if any Catholic adviser had come among them, would have as readily followed his admonitions, as they are known to have kept those commandments of God which they had learned and knew. But as for you and your companions, you certainly sin if, having heard the decrees of the Apostolic See and of the Universal Church, and that the same is confirmed by Holy Writ, you refuse to follow them; for, though your fathers were holy, do you think that their small number, in a corner of the remotest island, is to be preferred before the Universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours (and I may say, ours also, if he was Christ's servant) was a holy man and powerful in miracles, yet could he be preferred before the most blessed prince of the apostles, to whom our Lord said, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.'"[1]

King Oswy, as we have already intimated, was strongly attached to the Scottish usages, but the speech of Wilfrid seems to have been quite convincing; at all events his predilections were for the moment overborne by the abbot's eloquence.

[1] Dr. Giles's translation has been used in this extract, with a few verbal changes.

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Common sense, when prejudice does not come in the way, is no mean theologian, and King Oswy appears at once to have divined the proper test by which to try the catholicity of a doctrine or a rite. Wilfrid had scarcely concluded the text regarding St. Peter when the king turned to the bishop of Lindisfarne, and said, "Is it true, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?" He replied, "It is true, O king." "Then," rejoined Oswy, "can you show any such power given to your Columba?" Colman answered, "None." "Then," added the king, "do you both agree that these words were principally directed to Peter, and that the keys of heaven were given to him by our Lord?" Both Wilfrid and Colman answered, "We do." Whereupon Oswy replied, "And I also say unto you, that he is the doorkeeper whom I will not contradict, but will, as far as I know and am able, in all things obey his decrees, lest, when I come to the gates of the kingdom of heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys." The decision of the Council was, that it was better to abandon the old imperfect custom and conform to the Roman practice.

This judgment of the Council of Whitby was a great step towards the consummation of Wilfrid's hopes. In his speech he had laid open the true disease of England, the disease which was then drawing it onward to the brink of schism, which clung to it more or less, succouring the evil and baffling the good, even up to the primacy of Archbishop Warham; which plunged it into that depth

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of sacrilege, heresy, and libertinism, in which it has lain since the time of Henry VIII., and has hitherto retarded its penitence and self-abasement. He referred the stubborn nonconformity of his times to that narrow temper of self-praise fostered by our insular position, leading the great mass of common minds to overlook with a bigoted superciliousness almost the very existence of the Universal Church, and to disesteem the privileges of communion with it. A *particular* church, priding itself upon its separate rights and independent jurisdiction, must end at last in arrogating to itself an inward purity, a liberty of change, and an empire over the individual conscience far more stringent and tyrannous than was ever claimed by the Universal Church. In other words, nationalism must result in the meanest form of bigotry, and, as being essentially demoralising, must be a fearful heresy in theology. Meanwhile it should not be forgotten that much is to be said, very much indeed, for the pertinacity of St. Colman, and his retirement from his see. A controversy and a separation where both parties were holy men, and both at this day venerated by the Church—this is a fact which nothing but the Catholic Church can display, a noble phenomenon not rare in her miraculous history.

This controversy about Easter was one of such great importance in the history of the Saxon Church, as in reality going deeper than itself, and affecting the vitals of a church, and Wilfrid took such a leading part in the happy settlement of the question, that it seems quite necessary to carry on and conclude in his life the further history of the debate.

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After the Council of Whitby, St. Colman and his adherents retired into Scotland; and it was into that country that the war against the Scottish usages was carried. It was about the year 690, twenty-six years after this Council, that St. Adamnan, the abbot of Iona, came into England on business. He was a man whose mind had been enlarged by foreign travel, and therefore, as being more free from bigotry, was also more likely to appreciate the many privileges of Catholic uniformity. He was struck with the Roman usages in England, and made them his study; the consequence of which was an ardent adoption of them. On his return into Scotland he exerted all his influence to bring about conformity with the Holy Roman Church; he extended his labours even into Ireland. Great success appears to have followed; indeed, the greater part of the Irish abandoned their faulty cycle, and many in the British Church likewise. But a prophet is without honour in his own country; abbot though he was, his own monks of Iona resisted the change, and he was unable to force it upon them. Iona had so long taken the lead, as a kind of ecclesiastical metropolis, the university of the Scottish system, that it was natural to expect a vigorous opposition there. Paltry motives would reinforce worthy motives, and so create a popular clamour in support of such as were honestly and devoutly attached to their hereditary usages. In the beginning of the eighth century the Church of the West Saxons felt the inconveniences of non-conformity in the practices of the numerous British congregations subject to that nation. A synod was

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held, and Aldhelm, abbot of Malmesbury, was instructed to write a treatise on the Easter question, in order to reduce the Britons to conformity. St. Bede describes it as a book of singular merit, and adds that so persuasive was it that it induced many to forego their ancient custom and adopt the Catholic celebration of our Lord's resurrection. In 710, or about that year, Naitan, king of the Picts, sent messengers to St. Ceolfrid, abbot of Jarrow, to receive instruction in Roman usages, and Ceolfrid's letter seems to have done a very great deal both to spread and consolidate the following of Roman traditions. But the important letter itself, as well as the interesting circumstances connected with it, belong rather to the life of the holy author himself.

The conclusion of this controversy, and the reduction of Iona itself to Catholic uniformity, must be entered upon somewhat more at length. Wilfrid was the chosen instrument to bring about this happy issue in the Northumbrian Church; but in the way of Christian retribution the victory was not complete. The Scottish Church had been a second mother to the Northumbrian Church, and it had filled the throne of Lindisfarne with four blessed Saints. It was needful that the English daughter should convey to the Scottish mother that better thing which had been given to her, full communion of rites as well as doctrines with the Universal Church. The man who finished Wilfrid's work was Egbert, and that was fifty-two years after the Council of Whitby.[1]

[1] Mabillon seems to have quoted Bede inaccurately, when he says that Egbert's labours were only one year after the letter of St. Ceolfrid. St. Bede says, "nec multo post," not *anno insequente*, and a few lines further on specifies the year, 716.

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The year of the Council, 664, was also distinguished by a fearful pestilence; the man who was destined to complete Wilfrid's work seems to have learnt his vocation from his sufferings in that disease, and in the very year when Wilfrid had gained his victory in Northumberland. So is Providence silently carrying out its designs in many places at once, and accomplishing its merciful intentions through long obscure preparations. We now and then catch a glimpse of these parallel lines, far apart, often seemingly diverging and swerving the wrong way; and when history lays bare such things she is fulfilling her highest function, and our business is to acknowledge and adore. In this very year, then, 664, the pestilence reached a monastery in Ireland, called Rathmelsigi. It was at that time a very general custom for English youths to frequent the Scottish monasteries in Ireland, as well for education as advancement in spiritual perfection. The hospitable Scots received all who came, fed them daily without any charge, furnished them with books to read, and cheerfully instructed those who sought for advice. In this monastery of Rathmelsigi were two English youths, brothers, named Ethelhun and Egbert, whose third brother, Ethelwin, was afterwards bishop of Lincoln, and died in the odour of sanctity. So fatal was the plague in that house that at length all died but these two brothers, and they were grievously sick, and in expectation of death. Egbert had still strength to leave the infirmary, and going aside into a place where he could be secret, he meditated upon the sins of his past life. Who shall confront

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that vision and remain unmoved? Such possession did the spirit of compunction take of Egbert's whole being that the tears gushed out from his eyes, and in an agony of earnestness he prayed that he might not die yet, but be kept alive to do penance for the sins of his careless boyhood. He vowed, if God would deign to prolong his life, to recite the whole Psalter daily, besides the Canonical Hours, unless prevented by sickness, and so fast one whole day and night every week, and further to exile himself from his native land, and be a stranger and a wanderer his whole life long, for Christ's sake and the punishment of his youthful sins. After making this vow he returned into the infirmary, where he found his brother Ethelhun asleep. He also lay down, and remained quiet, but wakeful. Shortly afterwards Ethelhun awoke, and looking upon Egbert, said, "Alas! brother Egbert, what have you done? I was in hopes that we should have entered together into life everlasting; but know that what you prayed for is granted." For God had revealed Egbert's vow to his brother in a dream, with an assurance that it was accepted. The next night Ethelhun entered into his rest, and Egbert slowly recovered. Such were the beginnings of the Saint whom God raised up to complete St. Wilfrid's work. His earnest piety, his acts and austerities, his connection with Willebrord and the German missions, will be related in his own life. It is enough to state here that in 716, the seventy-seventh of the Saint's life, he won over the monks of Iona by his eloquence and gentle demeanour, and thus established Roman traditions

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and usages in the very head-quarters of the old Scottish customs. And this may be considered the termination of that long and vexing controversy which had so often menaced the Church with overt schism. The cursory sketch here given is sufficient to show how far St. Wilfrid aided the settlement of it, and that he is in fact the person to whom we owe the reduction of the Northumbrian Church to Catholic uniformity.

The fearful pestilence of 664 gathered many of the Saxon saints into the garner of the Lord. Two bishops fell victims to it in Northumbria—St. Cedd, the bishop of London, who from time to time retired into his monastery in the north, and likewise Tuda, the bishop of Lindisfarne. The vacancy caused by the death of this latter prelate was the source of Wilfrid's long and sanctifying troubles. It would appear that for some time after the Council of Whitby, King Oswy was a resolute defender of the Roman usages—the more zealous, perhaps, in order to make amends for his former strenuousness in behalf of the Scottish traditions—and that afterwards his fervour cooled down, and he reverted to his former partialities in behalf of his hereditary customs. This conjecture seems the only explanation of a difficult and perplexing chapter in Wilfrid's history.[1] There is no doubt that Alfrid proposed the elevation of Wilfrid to the vacant throne of Lindisfarne, and it is said that every one agreed he was the fittest person, from his austere life, won-

[1] Mr. Soames says Wilfrid disgusted people by going about France parading his episcopal dignity and pomp, but he does not vouchsafe to give us his authority for the assertion.

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derful knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, devout study of the lives of the Saints, and incessant perusal of the ecclesiastical canons. Oswy certainly assented to Wilfrid's nomination, even if he did not take an active part in the matter. Wilfrid most humbly pleaded his own unworthiness, neither did he accept the weighty burden of the episcopate till it became a scruple with him lest he should be rejecting a manifestly Divine vocation. But when he had consented to undertake this high office in the Church, other scruples arose in his mind of a very serious nature. The Saxon Church was in a state of deplorable confusion; the See of Canterbury was without a bishop; it was exceedingly doubtful whether the ordination of any of the existing bishops, except Wine, of the West Saxons, had been canonical; it was quite open to a question whether the Scottish nonconformity did not amount to schism when Rome had spoken so plainly about the matter; and lastly, there was a gross, and open, and unresisted Erastianism throughout the island, most grievous to a pious mind, and full of perplexity. Bishop Agilbert seemed almost to have given the system up. Though he had been both witness and agent in the steps taken by the Council of Whitby to Catholicise the English Church, yet he had now retired into France, and his example would greatly enhance the difficulty which tender consciences would feel in positions of trust as authorised rulers or teachers. Wilfrid therefore spoke his mind openly to the two kings. He said it was far from his wish to vilify the existing bishops, but that their position with re-

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ference to the Apostolic See was such that he could not submit to receive consecration at their hands. In short, he made it a condition of his acceptance of the bishopric of Lindisfarne that he should be sent into France to receive an undeniably canonical consecration.

To many persons in our days these scruples will seem so unreal as to be unintelligible; while to others, and those not a few, they will have a distressing reality. Of course those who do not believe in the divine institution of the Visible Church and the mysteriousness of her privileges, will perceive in St. Wilfrid's hesitation nothing but a superstitious and judaising spirit; more especially when, through long disesteem of apostolic order, they have learned to look on jealousy for Catholic doctrines and the high-minded anathemas of Holy Church as bigotry, ignorance, or at best, great uncharitableness. It is quite impossible for any one to sustain for long an affectionate jealousy about the doctrines which concern the Divine Person and Two Natures of our Lord, who is not likewise exceedingly jealous for the divine forms, unity, ritual, and succession of the Visible Church. The preservation of true saving doctrine is tied to the formal constitution of the Visible Church just as much, and with as infrequent exceptions, as the gift of regeneration is tied to the form of Baptism, or the Justifying Presence of Christ consigned to the Sacrifice of the Altar. The world *assumes* the divine forms of the Church to be mere externals, and arguing from its own unwarrantable premiss, condemns the Saints as verbal disputants and sticklers for empty ceremonial. No wonder,

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then, that in these days, St. Wilfrid's scruples should be matter of derision. But there are others who find the present state of things only too fruitful in similar perplexities, and the danger is not slight of their putting themselves into a false position in consequence of their distress. Under any circumstances the office of ecclesiastical rulers, teachers, and priests is full of difficulty from its double nature. They who bear it have not only the government and discipline of themselves to look to, their growth, mutations, lapses, as lay Christians have, but to this they superadd another entire second life, through their solemn and sacramental relations to others. Is it not then a very fearful thing for them to have a doubt cast on the efficacy of their priesthood, the reality of those tremendous acts which they have performed in the name of priests, and the truthfulness of their absolutions and consecrations? and if we further assume the possible cases of ailing health and broken spirits, what a burden must it be for reason to bear and not give way? Indeed, it is hardly right to go on dwelling upon it. Enough has been said to suggest more: there is *some* support in seeing that so great a Saint as Wilfrid keenly felt a somewhat similar position, and did not hesitate to act at much cost upon these feelings. But, further than this, is there not almost incalculable comfort in reflecting on the actual history? Wilfrid stood, as all men stand in their generation, amidst the blinding battle which the present always is: he was oppressed with doubts about the system of his Church, because of the relation in which it stood to the chief bishop: he was able at once, though with

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some pains, to clear up his position. This latter mercy may be denied to us; but we, looking at Wilfrid's days as part of the past, are permitted to see the Church whose system he doubted of recognised as an integral part of the Body Catholic, the prelates whose consecration he distrusted canonised as Saints, his own rival, whose ordination was indisputably uncanonical, now revered as one of our holiest English bishops. When we naturally couple together, almost without thought, St. Wilfrid and St. Chad, we read ourselves a lesson which, if we would only receive it, is full of deepest consolation and most effectual incentives to strictness and holiness of life, and a quiet occupying of ourselves with present duties.

Wilfrid was about thirty years of age when he left England to seek consecration at the hands of the French bishops. Agilbert, who had ordained him priest, was at this time bishop of Paris, and Wilfrid naturally had recourse to him. Eleven other bishops assisted at his consecration, which took place at Compiegne; and, according to the existing ceremonial of the French Church, the new prelate was carried in a golden chair by his brother bishops, singing hymns of joy; none but bishops being allowed to touch the chair. It does not appear how long Wilfrid remained in France; for some reason or other he delayed his return for a considerable time. In crossing the sea he and his clergy are described as sitting upon the deck and chanting psalms; but the voyage was not so favourable as they had expected. When they were midway between the two shores a dreadful storm arose, which

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cast them on the coast of the South Saxons. The storm was followed by an unusual ebb of the sea, so that the vessel was left high up on the sand. The people came down to seize upon the wreck, and take the prisoners. Wilfrid's band was about one hundred and twenty, very small in comparison of the multitude of the country people: he therefore endeavoured to come to terms with them, promising a considerable ransom if no violence was used. The country people, who were pagans, had with them a priest, who, according to his rites, stood upon a hill, like Balaam, to curse the strangers. While he was in the very act of pronouncing his malediction one of Wilfrid's men slung a stone at him, and killed him on the spot. The idolaters rushed furiously upon the little band; Wilfrid and his clergy knelt upon the shore to pray, and, through the mercy of God, the people were utterly routed, with the loss of only five men of Wilfrid's party. At the turn of the tide the sea returned to its just limits; the vessel floated off, and with a favourable wind entered the port of Sandwich.

Meanwhile affairs had been taking a very unhappy turn in the north. Oswy had persons about him who viewed Wilfrid with jealous eyes on account of the active part which he had taken against the Scottish usages, and the fervour of the king's conversion had begun to cool down. It is not improbable that there was mingled with this some jealousy and distrust of Alfrid, whose influence was greater than his father wished it to be; and Alfrid had so completely and energetically identified himself with the Romanising movement

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in the Northumbrian Church that he was always sure of a very formidable party. Oswy's feelings were artfully worked upon by some of his courtiers, and at length the prolonged absence of Wilfrid was made the pretext for nominating some one else to his see. St. Chad was the person whom Oswy selected, and he was consecrated by Wine, the bishop of Winchester, assisted by two British bishops. Wilfrid, therefore, on his arrival in the north, found his throne uncanonically occupied by St. Chad. He was not a man likely to relinquish a right for the sake of ease and quietness, when the interests of the Church were concerned; but he was likewise a Saint: and he doubtless discerned something in the aspect of the times which satisfied him that retirement and self-restraint and patient waiting upon God were clearly duties, however repugnant to the natural activity and practical turn of his mind. Only thirty years of age, and how much of his work already done! Was it not indeed high time for a season of self-seclusion, of secret discipline, of cleansing austerities, of solitary communion with God? He retired, therefore, to his monastery at Ripon, and gave himself up to the study and acquirement of Christian perfection in the ascetic exercises of a conventual life. It was a pause in his troubled life: there is not much to tell, but there is much to think upon.

It was not till the year 669 that he was restored to his bishopric, but the intervening years were not wholly spent in the secrecy of his monastery. In 659 the Mercians had rebelled against Oswy, who, after the death of Peada, had united Mercia to his

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own dominions. The Mercians, being successful, raised Wulfere, Penda's second son, to the vacant throne. At the time of his accession Wulfere was a pagan, but soon afterwards became a zealous believer. From his foundation at Stamford, which he, no doubt, visited from time to time, Wilfrid was well known among the Mercians, and as they were at that time without a bishop, Wulfere requested him to exercise his episcopal functions in that country. The holy bishop soon came to have great influence over the king, so that at last he governed almost entirely by Wilfrid's counsels, and, at Wilfrid's request, founded a great number of monasteries in his kingdom. It was probably then that the monastery of Oundle was founded.

During this time the see of Canterbury was vacant. St. Deusdedit died in 664, and in the ensuing year, Oswy, who was at that time the chief English sovereign, joining with Egbert of Kent, chose Wighard for the new archbishop, and sent him to Rome for consecration. There he died, and from one cause or another, his successor, St. Theodore, did not arrive at Canterbury till the month of May 669. Many inconveniences of course resulted from the want of an archbishop; and King Egbert accordingly sent for Wilfrid to ordain clergy and to administer the diocese till the arrival of the new primate. No sooner, however, did he receive notice of the approach of St. Theodore than he left Kent and retired into the north. The treasures which he carried away from Canterbury were characteristic, — two chanters, Eddi and Eona, well skilled in the Roman method

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of singing, and a band of masons and other artificers for church-building.[1] Thus accompanied, he went into Yorkshire, to abide patiently the interference of the new archbishop in the matter of the unjust usurpation of his see. This interference was not long delayed. The same year of his arrival in England, St. Theodore made a general visitation of the island; and it would appear that he found everything in disorder and confusion, the natural result of neglecting the Roman traditions of St. Gregory and St. Augustine. Of course the humble and holy Chad was deposed, nor was he loth to lay aside the perilous dignity of the episcopate. His consecration was clearly uncanonical, as he had been intruded into another's see; but, independent of this, there appears to have been something faulty in the manner of it, as we are told that St. Theodore, greatly admiring his humility, determined he should be a bishop in some other see, and perfected his consecration in a Catholic way. Wilfrid was thus put in possession of his see, and governed it in laborious peace for nine whole years.

When a man is raised up to do some special work in the world, the idea of it seems completely to master his whole life. It becomes impregnated with the high principle on which he acts, so that every detail of it looks one way, and has one only meaning. It is the aspect which a life of this kind

[1] Mabillon (xv. 64) says, Wilfrid *then* brought the Rule of St. Benedict from Canterbury, and introduced it into the north. This is plainly inaccurate: Wilfrid brought it from Rome, not from Canterbury, and had already established it to some considerable extent in the north.

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presents to ordinary minds which leads them to call it bigotry, narrowness, and a want of large-heartedness; for the unvarying consistency of a high principle, and the ubiquity of its influence, and its constant appearance in trivial matters where it was not looked for and seems out of place, are little understood by men in general, whose lives are not steered by the light of any one principle at all, but are at the capricious mercy of circumstances rather than in command of them. It has been already shown at what an early age Wilfrid detected the unsoundness of the Church in the north of England, with what distinctness he perceived that devotion to Rome was the sole remedy for the ailing times, and with what promptness he gave himself up to the cultivation of that feeling in himself, and the propagation of it amongst others. This becomes more and more developed as life goes on. The see of Lindisfarne had become vacant; he had been preferred to it; he had been kept out of it by an uncanonical intrusion; he had been restored by the new primate from Rome. Yet there is not a word of Lindisfarne, though in that holy island he had received his early education; neither is there a word of any change; but all at once Wilfrid is bishop, not of Lindisfarne, but of York! The succession of the Scottish throne is interrupted; the intervening past is as it were put aside, and Wilfrid succeeds, not to Aidan, and Finan, and Colman, and Tuda, but to St. Paulinus. Surely the riddle is not hard to find out: such a change in Wilfrid's hands needs no interpretation. Was it foolish and puerile if he thought anything

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more of it than as a matter of diocesan convenience? Anyhow it was wonderfully consistent, and consistency has a great look of principle.

And what is the first thing which we read of the new bishop of York?—bishop only, for St. Paulinus had carried the pall away; and great gifts forfeited are not retrieved all at once, lest they should fall a second time into a worse contempt. What is Wilfrid's first act? The cathedral of St. Paulinus, where St. Edwin was baptized, and which St. Oswald had completed—it had missed its bishops sadly. The foundations had settled, and so the walls had cracked, the rain oozed through the yawning roof, the windows[1] were unglazed, and birds' nests hung in an unsightly way about the bare mullions, and the pillars and internal walls ran down with green slime or were covered with a growth of dripping moss; and worse even than this, the furniture of the altar and the vessels for the Blessed Sacrifice were mean, outworn, indecent. The cathedral of York, therefore, was Wilfrid's first care. He restored the walls, leaded the roof, glazed the windows, scraped the pillars, and provided sumptuous garniture for the altar. He gave, moreover, a copy of the four Gospels written in gold letters on a purple ground, and some copies of the Bible adorned with gold and gems. His cæmentarii at Canterbury, and other artificers, went to work first on the cathedral of York; but they had no easy life of it. When one thing was done, Wilfrid had another ready, and to the masons

[1] The windows before were filled with lattices of wood and linen curtains.

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he might perhaps sometimes seem a little too impatient for a Saint. Next perhaps in dignity, certainly next, if not first, in his affections, was the abbey at Ripon; the cathedral restored, the abbey was looked to. The church there was perhaps not worth restoring: at any rate a restoration fell far short of the princely design of Wilfrid. From the very foundations he reared an entirely new church, all of wrought stone, a sumptuousness much dwelt upon in those times, as we may see from Bede's praise of the church St. Paulinus built at Lincoln. Indeed Wilfrid was a successor of St. Paulinus in more things than in his bishopric. Round the stone church were raised goodly columns and manifold porches, the wonder of all Yorkshire, and, Wilfrid being the builder, of course it was dedicated under the name of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles and spiritual father of the Roman pontiffs. This was not all at Wilfrid's own expense. Egfrid was then the king of the Northumbrians. On his accession he had found himself involved in two wars, one in the north with the Picts, and another in the south with the Mercians. Egfrid was victorious over both his enemies, and by his victory over the Mercians he recovered Lincolnshire, and once more added it to his kingdom. In gratitude for this success, he endowed the abbey of Ripon most liberally, and made large contributions towards the completion of the works then going on.

It was a happy day for Wilfrid, when, in 671,[1] he celebrated the consecration of St. Peter's minster at Ripon. King Egfrid was there, and King Elfwin

[1] Alban Butler fixes it in 670.

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his brother, and a concourse of abbots and magistrates, and a mixed multitude of high and low. Wilfrid preached on the occasion, and doubtless put forth to the utmost the extraordinary powers of oratory which we are told he possessed. When the sermon was over, the bishop recited, in the audience of all the people, the gifts of the king to the abbey of Ripon, a wise precaution as well as a grateful honour; then followed the rite of consecration, of course after the Roman manner; no doubt the singing was antiphonal, and conducted by Eddi and Eona: and for three days the bishop, kingly-hearted prelate as he was, entertained the two monarchs with all the splendour of monastic hospitality, which has a heartiness in it beyond all other hospitality, from the self-denial which goes before the feast, and is to follow after. There are still spots in the world where such hospitality is to be met with, and still hearts which are not likely to forget its peculiarly edifying frankness and simplicity.

But sadness is ever nigh to feasting; this is a moral law which is rarely suspended, for it would hardly be a beneficent miracle if it were. There was sadness nigh to Wilfrid's consecration-feast—bitter herbs, the pilgrim's seasoning. Wilfrid had lived in Wulfere's court; Wulfere's kingdom had been governed by his counsels. In the heart of many a deep wood, and by the brink of many a quiet river, convent after convent had risen up and down Mercia; for Wilfrid's wish was Wulfere's rule. In spite then of the munificent thank-offerings which Egfrid's victory brought to the monastery at Ripon, Wilfrid's heart must have bled in

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secret for the misfortunes of Wulfere;[1] and soon after his defeat, that broken-hearted monarch died. Who can trace the influence of Wilfrid's counsels, admonitions, examples, spiritual training in that wonderful royal family of Mercia? What a picture is it to look back upon, a crowd of kinsfolk, a crowd of canonised Saints, Wilfrid the centre of the group, forming them into Saints! Surely never was there such a family as that of Wulfere. First, there was the good king himself, sitting at the bishop's feet, and there was Ermenilda, his holy queen, herself a Saint; and then there was their daughter Wereburga, who governed Trent, and Weedon, and Hamburg, three peaceful convents, and was the patron Saint of Chester. Merwald, her brother, reigned with the pious Ethelred, and he had three fair daughters, Milburga of Wenlock, and Mildreda of Menstrey, and Milgitha, and their little brother Merefin, famous for his childish sanctity,—and all these were canonised Saints; and Etheldreda, and Withburga, and Sexburga were all their kinsfolk, and Ercongota too, and the abbess of Barking, the blessed Edelburga, and Erconwald, the founder of Chertsey. And the daughters of Penda were five canonised Saints, no less than his granddaughters. And to many readers it would seem weary to tell of Wulfad, and of Ruffin, and of Rumwald, and of Tibba, and of others who were of that one royal stock, and were all saints honoured by the Holy Church. How the grace of God ran

[1] The story that Wilfrid prayed against Wulfere, because he had taken away the monastery of Stamford from the monks at Lindisfarne, seems wholly unworthy of credit.

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over and abounded in that peerless family! There was much grace, for there was much affliction. Yet though adversity was causing the seed to spring which Wilfrid had sown, he was not a man without a heart of flesh; for the more the affections are mortified, the more are they quickened; and there is no love so keen, so delicate, so sensitive, as the love which animates the spare frame of the warm ascetic; and deeply, very deeply we may be sure did Wilfrid mourn over the disgrace and death of the kind, and hospitable, and saintly king of Mercia.

Still, with many griefs of heart, with many outward thwartings, he went on his way, toiling; he kept to his work and his labour till the evening, and the evening was yet far off.

But we have not done with the cæmentarii and other artificers from Canterbury. The Minster at Ripon is finished and consecrated, and Wilfrid now moves his workmen northward. From the banks of the dashing Ure, and the woody margin of the dark-watered Nidd, the bishop of York travelled to the forked valley of the romantic Tyne; and some little below the spot where the two branches of the river meet, where the town of Hexham stands, the "magnifical" work of church-building again commenced. Here St. Oswald's great battle had been fought, and his great victory won: here was his Hevenfeld, and here his wonder-working cross of perishable wood. In all the romantic north, scarce one valley can compete with the double vale of the north and south Tyne: modern science has now cloven its way through the hang-

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ing cliff, and the crumbling bank, and the branching wood, and over the tortuous, oft-encountered stream, so that its once secluded beauties of wood, rock, and water are now open to all. And there St. Wilfrid reared the abbey of St. Andrew. Eddi, the precentor, was lost in wonder. Who ever saw foundations sunk so deep as these? What blind feeling impelled the holy architect, at all costs, to come to solid rock? What a fancy was this of his! Still he dug, and the trenches went on deepening and broadening till they were yawning chasms, and in them the princely bishop sunk, where man's eye could not see them—it was God's glory *he* sought, not man's praise—deep in those trenches foundation stones "mirifically" wrought. His columns and his porches, which he loved so much, they were even more wonderful at Hexham than they had been at Ripon. And the height and the length of the nave and aisles, people wondered at that too; and at the secrecies of the triforium still more; but it was the bishop's design; he felt, as others may feel, their hearts grow large in the dim vastness of our Catholic temples. And the winding ways upwards and downwards, Eddi declares that the littleness of his style must not attempt to describe them; for he saw that the bishop was inspired, like Bezaleel of old, for all agreed that on our side of the Alps was there no church like this new minster of Wilfrid's building. All honour, therefore, be to the blessed memory of him who in those dark old times took heart and built St. Andrew's in the beautiful valley of the Tyne!

Alas! in these modern days we measure all men

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by our own contractedness. We do not allow men to be able to do more than one work, or to have more than one virtue. One half of religion keeps the other half in check. We leave one thing undone lest it should lead us to neglect another. Mary chides Martha, and Martha disturbs Mary; we are not practical, for we cannot be so unless we are contemplative, and we dare not be contemplative lest we should depreciate the importance of being practical. We dare not love God, lest it should wean us from equable love of our neighbour, and so we concentre all our love upon ourselves, the sorriest of all unamiable things. Now, some may think St. Wilfrid did nothing but build material churches, and therefore that he was but an indifferent bishop. It would be a great thing if all bishops did so much as build material churches, for many do much less than even that. But a man would build very poor churches if he did not do many other and greater things beside. There is a living Church in England now, which we trust is something more than a material church. It were sad if it were not; for it has weathered many a storm, and ridden through some frightful gales, and well-nigh gone to pieces on some terrific rocks. It would have gone to pieces if it had been nothing more than a material church. It is to be hoped it may prove a safe shelter in some very wild weather yet. Well, St. Wilfrid was one of the master-builders of this same Church of ours. Ripon stands, and Hexham stands, and the Church of living stones stands too: they stand, and that is something, though they are all in a crazy state, and want new Wilfrids to them.

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But what else did Wilfrid do? He preached: he went about preaching perpetually, and the visitation of that huge diocese was no light thing in the seventh century; it is not a light thing now, when the great palatinate of Durham has been severed from it, and the modern diocese of Ripon; but it was a very different thing in those days, as different as a monk is from a poor soft secular. However, the bishops then were mostly monks, and their vocation carried them cheerily through a great deal of rough living. He was an eloquent preacher too, yet precise in his language, and plain in his style; just such a preacher as St. Alfonso Liguori would have delighted in. Nay, so much did Wilfrid think of preaching—for it was safer to exalt it then than it would be now, when the Christian sacraments are disesteemed—that when he signed the charter of Peterborough (if that document is not a forgery) he subscribed it thus, "I, Wilfrid, the priest, the servant of the Churches, and carrier of the Gospel among the nations." We are told that heat and cold, wind and wet, the rugged roads and flooded rivers, were all as nothing to him, so perseveringly did he go up and down preaching the word. And what bishop is there with anything apostolic about him, who does not set a special value on that prerogative of his order, the conferring the sacrament of Confirmation? All the Saints have been lovers of little children: not to mention other instances, how wonderfully St. Philip Neri yearned towards them! The love of little children was, so to speak, one of the touching characteristics of our blessed Lord's human life. He can be touched in His little

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ones: should not the Saints, then, love to be their ministers? And when Confirmation is put off, as it often is, till the end of childhood and the beginning of boyhood, what a touching solemnity it is! Just when our three great enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, might league with our own perverse will to rifle the treasure of Baptism, this other sacrament steps in and seals it up again. At the very season when danger comes nigh at hand,—when the soul, yet weak, and somewhat, it may be, burdened with its untried and unaccustomed armour, is surrounded by the powers of darkness, the Church intervenes with this powerful sacrament, setting the seal of the Holy Spirit to the great baptismal gift which was in jeopardy. Alas! the purity of Baptism is too often polluted and obscured, as it is: but how much oftener would it be lost, how much oftener would the soul fall utterly from that illuminating grace, if it were not for the gift of Confirmation! Consider how little most boys think of religion; indeed, they appear to think much less of it than children. There seems less that is good, less that is divine, less that is honourable, less that is hopeful about boys than any other members of Christ's Church. It is an age which painfully tries the faith of parents, friends, and guardians. The love of church, and prayer, and the Bible, and the interest in death, funerals, and all softening and sacred things, which children often have, delighting their parents' hearts, seem to pass away or be clouded over in boyhood by self-will and nascent impurity. There is a negligence of thought, a hardening of the heart, a restlessness of the soul,

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a deplorable worship of self, most odious and depressing to Christian parents, and calling forth all their faith in the inestimable preciousness of Holy Baptism. So far as religion goes they seem to make no way with their children in boyhood. It appears that all they can do is to keep ploughing, and harrowing, and sowing, and watering a hard rock, in faith that God will make a harvest grow there some time, because He has promised to do so. To keep a *boy* from going wrong seems almost the nearest approach we can make towards persuading him to do right. Of course there are exceptions to this, exceptions which the special grace of God makes, exceptions not infrequent in young persons whose constitutions are enfeebled by some growing disease, and from whom, in merciful despite of themselves, the gay world is consequently kept at arm's length. There are exceptions, too, by God's mercy, in persons in whose constitutions there are the seeds of disease not yet developed, or who are intended in the mystery of the Divine Providence to die early. Indeed, we scarcely ever see a very pious boy without a half-thought coming into our minds that he will die soon; as people are in the habit of saying quite proverbially, "He is too good to live": the world, man's poor nature, bearing strange instinctive witness against itself. Yet, with the general run of men, boyhood is as has been described; and being then so unsatisfactory a time, so distressingly irreligious an age, such a selfish barren-hearted season, it seems a merciful thing that the Holy Church should be allowed to interpose here with her sacrament of Confirmation, a

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fresh pledge of God's goodness, a sign of the reality of Baptism, a witness that there is good seed in the soul which must be taken care of, although there does not appear any promise of its springing yet.

What bishop, then, will not feel his deepest affections called out by the sacrament of Confirmation? Wilfrid's Confirmations seem to have formed an integral part of his preaching, for there is no ordinance so intimately connected with preaching as this. St. Augustine says, "This is to preach the Gospel, not only to teach those things which are to be said of Christ, but those also which are to be observed by every one who desires to be confederated into the society of the body of Christ,"[1] that is, as Bishop Taylor comments, "not only the doctrines of good life, but the mysteries of godliness, and the rituals of religion, which issue from a divine fountain, are to be declared by him who would *fully* preach the Gospel." Even since the Reformation—if it is not almost irreverent to compare our times with those of unity—we read of a certain bishop of Chester, who, going into his diocese, where Confirmation had been long neglected, found the multitudes who thronged to that sacrament so numerous that even the churchyard would not hold them, and he was obliged to confirm in the fields, and would have been trodden to death by the throng if he had not been rescued by the magistrates.[2] And St. Bernard, in his Life

[1] De Fid. et Op. ix. "Hoc enim est evangelizare Christum, non tantum docere ea quæ sunt dicenda de Christo, sed etiam quæ observanda ei, qui accedit ad compagem corporis Christi." The narrow view of preaching taken in these days is nigh to very fearful heresy.

[2] Vindic. Eccles. Hierarch. per Franc. Hallier, ap. Taylor, xi. 231.

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of St. Malachi, bishop of Down and Connor, lauds his especial zeal in reviving the holy rite of Confirmation. Such seems to have been the conduct of Wilfrid; and crowds are described as seeking the chrism and imposition of hands from him, while the indefatigable bishop catechised them all with loving patience. Surely this was building up the living Church with invisible materials; and the winding ways of the blessed Saint's influence were more wonderful far than those of Hexham Abbey, which Eddi the precentor so much admired.

It was during one of his circuits through the country villages for the purpose of preaching and confirming, that God was pleased to set his seal to the sanctity of His servant Wilfrid by a visible miracle. In the village of Tiddafrey crowds pressed upon him to receive the unction of the holy chrism at his hands. During the rite a poor woman was seen forcing her way through the dense throng, with the demeanour of one in deepest trouble and vexation of spirit. She was bearing her child in her arms to be confirmed; the child's face was covered, says Matthew of Westminster, and the mother pretended she wished to have the boy catechised. But, in fact, the child was dead, and there was that within the mother's heart which told her that Wilfrid could raise him to life again. The bishop, uncovering the boy's face, perceived that he was dead; and he stood amazed and troubled at the sight, perhaps thinking the child had died recently, and without the mother being aware. But she, perceiving the bishop's hesitation, pressed upon him, and with her words interrupted by frequent sobs,

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she said, "See, my good lord, I had resolved to carry my boy to you to be confirmed in Christ, and now I bring him, not to be confirmed only, but to be raised to life again. You preach Christ the Almighty; prove your preaching by your works, and raise my only begotten from death. Surely it is no great thing that I ask of His Omnipotence." Thus saying, she gave herself up to all the violence of grief, and the people lifted up their voices in lamentable concert with her. The bishop, too, began to weep, and to recite some psalms in a low voice, and then he prayed, "O Father, look, I beseech Thee, not at my merits, but at Thine own merciful doings, and console this woman in her grief, and give her back her child, through Jesus Christ, Thine only-begotten Son." Then rising from his knees, he laid his right hand upon the child, who began to stir, and in a short time stood up in perfect health and strength. Wilfrid then gave him to his mother for seven years, claiming him for the service of God when that term was expired. The boy's name was Ethelwald; and when the seven years were over, his mother gave him up with an unwilling heart. He became a monk at Ripon, and ultimately died of the pestilence.

This was not the only miracle which the bishop wrought about this time. While Hexham Abbey was building, one of Wilfrid's favourite cæmentarii from Canterbury fell from a lofty scaffold. The bishop was not present, but knew in his spirit what had happened, and beginning to lament, desired those who were with him to intercede for the unhappy man, and all, straightway rising up in won-

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der, went to the place where the dead man lay. No sooner had Wilfrid touched the body than life returned, and the limbs were restored sound and whole.

One of Wilfrid's chief cares, a natural one in a great church-builder, was to beautify the service of the sanctuary, and to provide that the functions of the Church should be performed with reverent splendour and magnificent solemnity. And this too is part of preaching, surely no little part. What hope is there of people in whom the spirit of sacred timidity, of awe for unseen things, does not exist? It is not often that the heart is really at prayer when there is not a lowliness of corporal attitude. Without the help of our body and the admonition of its dejected postures, it is rare indeed to realise the Presence of God even in public worship. And then, too, what a consolation is it, in countries where the churches stand open well-nigh all the day, for the poor to leave their squalid dwellings, their bare, unfurnished, fireless room, and go to kneel amid the gold, and the lights, and the colour, and the incense, and the gleaming altars and the vast naves, and the thrilling organs of the churches, where all is, so to speak, their own—no pews, no jealous distinctions; such churches are obviously, what they really are inwardly, the homes of the poor—not the poor, miserable, untruthful, weekly pageant, waiting on the rich to soothe consciences which want wounding, while the pauper, the lame, the blind, the deaf, are thrust far off till all who can pay for seats are satisfied, and close themselves up in comfortable division from the scaring sight

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of poverty, disease, and filth. The man who built the wonderful abbey at Hexham would naturally take pains with the performance of the public ritual of the Church. Yet his adorning was of a solemn sort. With the help of Eddi and Eona, he introduced the plain chant all over the north, till Yorkshire was full of poor peasants singing David's psalms in the grave sweetness of the Gregorian tones.

But Wilfrid felt that there were few parts of a bishop's office so important as a strict vigilance over the monastic orders. Monastic orders are the very life's blood of a Church, monuments of true apostolic Christianity, the refuges of spirituality in the worst times, the nurseries of heroic bishops, the mothers of rough-handed and great-hearted missionaries. A Church without monasteries is a body with its right arm paralysed. All this Wilfrid knew full well, as well as we know it even with all our additional experience and melancholy convictions. So Dunstan felt, and so the blessed Ethelwold, both in their day, and so, far off from them, felt St. Alfonso, in his little Neapolitan diocese, and so Wilfrid felt, and took the matter strenuously in hand. He it was, as we have already seen, who introduced the Benedictine Rule into the northern shires of England; and that young man who left him at Lyons—we may remember how Eddi spoke of Paul and Barnabas—his name should never be disjoined from that of Wilfrid when this great work is mentioned; for St. Benedict Biscop can hardly be said to have carried on St. Wilfrid's work, but to have worked alongside of him, though apart.

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Providence seems to have raised them both up at once to do one and the same work all the more effectually, because they wrought independently. Indeed, there appears something like a law in this. There is rarely, if ever, any movement in the Church which is single: the movement seems to start from several points almost simultaneously. It is as though a spirit were resident in the whole body, greater far than the bent of an individual mind, or the contagious influences of party. The impulse is too general, or at least too extensive for such things to be an adequate account of it. The actuating spirit of the Church finds contemporary vents, sometimes close by each other, yet never coming into contact, or again, far off out of sight and hearing, yet with a uniform and consistent expression of the same inward want, and harmoniously prophetic of the same coming change. Perhaps this may be, to such as will receive it, a sufficiently consoling token of a Divine Presence, and therefore a hidden support to those called upon to co-operate in any religious movement, through weariness and calumny, thwarting and apparent failure. As in Mercia, under Wulfere's government, Wilfrid had bestowed especial pains upon the monasteries, so did he now in his northern diocese. Yet Mercia was not forgotten. It was by his counsel, in 677, that St. Etheldreda rebuilt the abbey of St. Peter at Ely, for which her brother Aldulph, the king of the East Angles, supplied the funds. Indeed, Wilfrid's influence penetrated everywhere. Abbots and abbesses voluntarily surrendered the government of their monasteries

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to him, while princes and nobles delivered their sons to him to be educated under his eye; and it is stated, that the pious parents took no umbrage at the result which so often happened—the youths declaring their determination to take the monastic habit, when their parents, at the proper age, proposed their entering the royal armies.

What a man of untiring energy Wilfrid must have been! Yet, under all this pressure of external business, this many-sided care of the Churches, he sanctified himself with ascetic diligence. He knew full well that a life of practical activity, unless perpetually quickened by retirement and invigorated by that closeness to God which secret contemplation attains, becomes mere dissipation of spiritual strength, mere uneasy inconsistent benevolence, and degrades the self-denial of charity to our neighbour, into the mere half-mental, half-animal need of being busied about many things. He watched over his chastity as his main treasure, and was by an unusual grace preserved from pollution; and to this end he chiefly mortified his thirst, and even in the heats of summer and during his long pedestrian visitations, he drank only a little phial of liquid daily. So through the day he kept down evil thoughts, and when night came on, to tame nature and to intimidate the dark angels, no matter how cold the winter, he washed his body all over with holy water, till this great austerity was forbidden him by Pope John. Thus, year after year, never desisting from his vigilance, did Wilfrid keep his virginity to the Lord. In vigil and in prayer, says Eddi the precentor, in reading and in fasting,

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who was ever like to him? Such was the private life of that busy bishop: so words sum up years, and cannot be realised unless they are dwelt upon, any more than that eternity by which they are repaid.

A bishop of York traversing his huge diocese on foot! Surely this in itself was preaching the Gospel. Fasting and footsore, shivering in the winter's cold, yet bathing himself in chilly water when he came to his resting-place at night; fainting beneath the sun of midsummer, yet almost grudging to himself the little phial of liquid; preaching in market-place, or on village green, or some central field amid a cluster of Saxon farms, behold the bishop of York move about those northern shires. He was not a peer of Parliament, he had no fine linen, no purple save at a Lenten mass, no glittering equipage, no liveried retainers; would it then be possible for those rude men of the north to respect him? Yes, in their rude way; they had faith, and haply they bowed more readily before him in that poor monkish guise than if he had played the palatine amongst them. Surely if we have half a heart we can put before our eyes as if it were a reality, Wilfrid on foot, Wilfrid preaching, Wilfrid confirming, Wilfrid sitting on a wrought stone watching his cæmentarii, as Dante sat upon his stone and watched the superb duomo of Florence rise like an enchanted thing; Wilfrid listening to a new and awkward choir trying the Gregorian tones and keeping his patience even when Eddi and Eona lost theirs, Wilfrid marching at the head of his clergy up the new aisles of Ripon,

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Wilfrid receiving the confession of St. Etheldreda, and what was the fountain of all, Wilfrid kneeling with the Pope's hands resting on his head and the Archdeacon Boniface standing by. But we must think of another thing also—Wilfrid riding, riding up and down his diocese; for this walking of Wilfrid's did not quite please St. Theodore; not that it was too simple, but that it was too austere, and the life of such a man needed husbanding for the Church's sake. Would that St. Theodore had always thought so! but he was a simple man as well as a wise one, and he too, strange that it should be so, mistook Wilfrid, knew not what he was, and so lost him for a while. However, at this time he thought nothing but what was true and good of Wilfrid, and he insisted—for he was archbishop of Canterbury—that his brother of York, who was but a bishop then, should have a horse to ride on during his longer journeys and more distant visitations. He knew this luxury pained Wilfrid; so he made it up to him in the best way he could, for, to show his veneration for the Saint, he insisted upon lifting him upon horseback whenever he was near him to do so. It would have been well for England if archbishops of Canterbury had always been of such a mind towards those who filled the throne of York. However, we now behold Wilfrid making his visitations on horseback; for obedience is a greater thing to a Saint than even his much-loved austerities. Taking a hardship away from a Saint is like depriving a mother of one of her children, yet for holy obedience' sake, or the edification of a neighbour, a Saint will post-

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pone even a hardship. Now, then, by the Ure and by the Nidd, by the holly-spotted commons of the Wharf and the then pastoral margin of the Aire, by the rocky Tees, and the blue Ganlesse, and the gravelly Weare, in the valley of the two sweet Tynes, and by the border brooks that flow within sight of the towers of Coldingham, Wilfrid follows the sheep-tracks on horseback, and so visits his beautiful diocese of York. A word here and a word there, a benediction and a prayer, the signed cross and the holy look, a confession heard, and a mass said, and a sermon preached, and that endless accompaniment of Gregorian tones; verily the Gospel went out from him as he rode.

And was this fair heaven to be overcast? Were these days to have an end ere death had come to force men to a compulsory contentment in the ending of all good things?—for that death's law is universal, and cannot be evaded. Yes, it was even so: the nine years came to an end. The devil was not envious only; he was dismayed also: for Wilfrid was obviously narrowing the bounds of his kingdom through the potent Cross of Jesus Christ, our Lord and God. There were abundant materials at hand for interrupting this fair Christian work in its hopeful progress.

It cannot be denied that the aspect of Church history is, on the first view of it, peculiarly discouraging; and those who take but a superficial glance at it, may easily be led into that most immoral of all infidelities—a disbelief in the existence of human virtue and of high motives. For the great majority of holy plans which the Saints have

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projected, have come to nought before half the harvest has been reaped; as though the best men, the choice specimens of our regenerate nature, had not had sufficient continuity of impulse or generous perseverance to reach their own good ends. The fervour of Orders has been often but a fever, and decay has not even waited till the first founder was in his tomb before its melancholy manifestation began. Men see this; it is painful to reflect twice upon it, and hence they have spoken of the blessed Saints in a style of disparaging apology, as of men not practical, or wise, or persevering, or consistent, but creatures of unregulated impulse, with now and then a grotesque heroism of their own. To others, again, it has appeared as though it was hopeless to try to do the world good, because in this world good has been a perpetual failure; virtue among men has been but as a gathered flower in a hot hand, out of its place, fading during that short while in which it seems to live: and these teach a disheartening wisdom, a selfish mediocrity; and they have so much truth on their side, that they deceive many. Virtue *is* but a gathered flower, and if we measure the good or ill success of it by our nearness to or remoteness from our self-appointed ends, truly good *has* been a constant failure; but, in sooth, our best, most tranquillising knowledge is that we are blind-fold workers doing the Will of God. But there is another consolation which we may fairly take to ourselves, notwithstanding that it has something very awful about it. It is not only that good men fail in good things for want of wisdom and perseverance, or for lack of better mate-

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rials to work upon than the mixed multitude of nominal believers; but, as is obviously manifested in the case of St. Wilfrid, there is a third baffling, thwarting influence, which is no less than the permitted agency of Satan. By this, if it so please God, a man may be beaten, and yet be blameless: and though it were a very unsafe thing to set up the cry of Satan wheresoever we hear of sin, even among the Saints, yet there are manifestations which cannot be mistaken; and inasmuch as his agency is undeniable, a man must ever add it in his thoughts to the weakness of the Saints and the vileness of the multitude, when he reads Church history; and it is not so enfeebling a thing to be afraid of malignant power, as to be disheartened by our own guilty infirmities. It does not appear that Satan found anything in Wilfrid's life out of which to weave his web; but he found elsewhere an almost embarrassing abundance of materials.

Oswy died in 670, and at that time Alfrid, the eldest son (as some say) was in Ireland, and the succession to the Saxon thrones of those days was so precarious, that absence was enough to make a man miss his crown. Others say that Egfrid was really Oswy's eldest son, and that, though Alfrid had had the most influence during his father's lifetime, the people forced him to leave Egfrid in quiet possession of his hereditary right. Under any circumstances, Wilfrid's intimate connection with Alfrid would be rather an objection to him in the eyes of Egfrid, or might be made so by the dexterous insinuations of persons hostile to the bishop. Then again, as has been already intimated, Wilfrid's

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friendship with Wulfere, the Mercian king, and his kind of ecclesiastical alliance with the political enemies of the Northumbrian kingdom, were manifestly open to much and easy misrepresentation. Again, we are told that the deference paid to him by the abbots of remote monasteries, and the influence he was gaining among the nobles by educating their children, also created much envy and dislike. Besides, a holy man must needs have many enemies; and Wilfrid was a bishop, and had patronage to bestow, and would certainly not bestow it on unworthy candidates, whoever their supporters might be; and he had discipline to enforce, and he was the last man to calculate consequences when duty was clear. Food, therefore, there was for envy in almost unusual abundance, and it was artfully nourished, till it was too much for the peace or the power of Wilfrid.

But we must say a word on Oswy's death. He had taken a decided part in favour of the Roman usages at the Council of Whitby; it would appear that he afterwards returned to his former preference for the Scottish customs. It was, however, only for a while: when St. Theodore restored Wilfrid to his see, the king's reconciliation to him seems to have been hearty. As he grew older, and witnessed more and more the great work Wilfrid was doing, his reverence for Rome increased, and at length he became so affectionately desirous to visit that holy city, and be instructed there in the ways of Christian perfection, that he was preparing to lay aside his crown and go in pilgrimage to Rome, and die there amid the holy places. He chose Wilfrid as his conductor, and promised him a kingly donation as a

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recompense. Wilfrid hardly needed an inducement to take him to his beloved Rome; but those Canterbury cæmentarii of his afforded him opportunities of spending money, such as his princely heart delighted in. The vision of the many-steepled hills of Rome was, however, but momentary—a cloud-city in the sunset. Death came, and Oswy entered into the heavenly Jerusalem; better, unspeakably better, than terrestrial Rome. Yet Rome was not far off from Wilfrid; he was soon to enter its blessed gates, but in other guise than that of the honoured conductor of a pilgrim king.

Meanwhile the building of Hexham Abbey was going on, and another accident was the occasion of a second miracle which Wilfrid wrought. As before he had restored to life one of the masons when quite dead, so now it was a young monk, with mangled limbs, and life still in him, who received his restoration from God through Wilfrid's sanctity. Indeed, he was but a boy, perhaps a novice only; and he fell from a great height upon the stone pavement below. Both his legs and arms were fractured, and his whole body so bruised and broken, that he seemed at the point of death. The bishop appears, from the narrative, to have been a witness of the accident; and, bursting into tears, he desired the masons to lay the sufferer on a bier, and carry him out of the building. Then collecting the brethren round him, he made a sign that they should all pray that, as Eutychus had been given to the prayers of Paul, so their young brother should now be restored to their prayers. When the prayers were ended

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Wilfrid blessed the boy, who seemed at the last gasp, and bade the leeches bind up the fractures in faith, and, contrary to all expectation, he recovered, but winning his strength gradually;—a cure not the less miraculous for that it was gradual, and that human means were called in; which may be observed in the case of some of our Blessed Lord's own miracles, the patterns of the wonders wrought by His Saints; though, indeed, it must not be forgotten that He is ascended now, and that He said His followers in time to come should do greater works than those of His.

But while Wilfrid was working miracles and preaching, building churches, and visiting his diocese, and, under the pressure of all these apostolic labours, was with great austerities keeping his body under, and bringing it into subjection, lest he himself should be a castaway, the devil was conspiring against him, and envy making its work perfect. The chief occasion of Wilfrid's second troubles was his connection with another of our famous English saints, the blessed Etheldreda, "twice a widow, yet always a maid." What a freshness is there in the edifying history of those times when Saint intersected Saint as they moved in their appointed orbits! Wonderful times to look back upon, very wonderful; yet, when that Past was the Present, haply it did not seem so all unlike the Present now. Let us hope this for our own sakes, if only we be not lifted up too much by such a thought. Surely it is not a slight grace to be the children of those multitudinous stars which shone in our ancient Church in those

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days of her first espousals. May God be praised evermore for that He gave us our Saxon Saints.

Perhaps there are few Saints more intimately connected than Wilfrid was with the sacred history of his country—of his times, we were going to say; but it were sad to think *any* times should come when that history should not be equally instructive and equally interesting to the Christian dwellers on this island. It was mainly through Wilfrid's attestation that the Church came to know of the perpetual virginity of St. Etheldreda[1]; and some little of her history must be related here, to clear up what is rather intricate in Wilfrid's life. St. Etheldreda was married to Egfrid in 660 or thereabouts, and desired to live with him a life of continence. The prince felt a scruple in denying this request; but after some time had elapsed, seeing the reverence which St. Etheldreda had for Wilfrid, to whom she had given the land for his abbey at Hexham, Egfrid determined to use the bishop's influence in persuading the holy virgin to forego her purpose. He offered Wilfrid large presents in land and money if he should succeed. How far Wilfrid dissembled with the king, or whether he dissembled at all, we cannot now ascertain: that he practised concealment is clear, and doubtless he thought it a duty in such a matter, and doubtless he was right: it would be pre-

[1] It would appear from a passage in Camden that there was something miraculous about this; but really in these days one shrinks even from holy relations, lest men should find room for gibes and impure sarcasms, where our forefathers reverenced the beautiful majesty of chasteness.

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sumptuous to apologise for his conduct; he is a canonised Saint in the Catholic Church. Of course, it is not pretended that the lives of the Saints do not afford us warnings by their infirmities, as well as examples by their graces. Only, where a matter is doubtful, it would be surely an *awful* pride not to speak reverently of those whom the discernment of the Church has canonised. The way in which the Fathers treat of the failings of the blessed Patriarchs should be our model. However, the probable account of the matter, and the one which best unites the various narratives, is this: Wilfrid, at her husband's desire, did lay before St. Etheldreda what Egfrid required; at the same time pointing out to her that obedience in such a matter was a clear duty, which nothing could supersede but a well-ascertained vocation from God. St. Etheldreda, it would appear, satisfied the bishop on this very point; and then his duty was at once shifted. So far from urging her to comply with her husband's desires, he did all he could to strengthen her in her chaste resolve, and to render her obedient to the heavenly calling. Of course we may anticipate the sort of objections which would be raised in these days to her conduct as a wife, and to her marrying Egfrid at all. But her defence belongs to her own life, not to Wilfrid's: our business here is simply a connected narrative of Wilfrid's share in the matter. In 671, through Wilfrid's influence, the king reluctantly gave way to Etheldreda's often expressed wish to retire into a monastery; but from that moment his heart was changed towards Wilfrid. Soon after Egfrid

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repented of this consent, and sent to take her from the monastery of Coldingham, to which she had retired. By the advice of St. Ebba, the abbess, Etheldreda fled, and was preserved on a mountain by a very extraordinary miracle; and in 673 she founded her monastery at Ely, and received the benediction as abbess from Wilfrid himself. This was the great grievance which Egfrid had against Wilfrid; and though he dissembled his hatred for the present, yet we are told by Thomas, the monk of Ely, and biographer of St. Etheldreda, that Wilfrid's ruin was now determined upon.[1]

Meanwhile King Egfrid married again; for it would appear that a regular divorce had taken place between St. Etheldreda and himself. His new queen was a very different person from the blessed Etheldreda, and her power to do mischief was not long in making itself felt. Ermenburga is described as being haughty and vindictive, and the stern, uncompromising Wilfrid came athwart both her evil passions. Through the piety of Oswy and his nobles, the churches throughout Wilfrid's immense diocese had been most richly provided with

[1] Father Cressy attacks the Magdeburg centuriators for mentioning St. Wilfrid's conduct about St. Etheldreda as being the main cause of his banishment, because, he says, no mention is made of it in the subsequent disputes. Doubtless the centuriators meant that it was the real though remote cause, as being the beginning of Egfrid's hatred; and this is surely true. But Cressy's accuracy cannot be depended upon: he assigns two different deaths to a king of the Mercians within a very few pages. The centuriators certainly tell St. Etheldreda's story in their own way; but when they have done their best, one does not see what they have gained towards a justification of the sacrilegious concubinage of the infamous Luther.

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furniture for the altars, and vessels for the blessed Sacrifice. Many were of gold, none of a viler metal than silver, and copes, and chasubles, and maniples were embroidered in the most costly way. Now, meanness generally lies alongside of haughtiness, and so Ermenburga began to cast a covetous eye upon these treasures of the sanctuary. When she saw how the good bishop was courted by high and low, how the nobles sought to him for counsel, how a court of abbots did obeisance to him, how the sons of princes and peers stood round him proud to serve in such a service, Ermenburga's pride was inflamed beyond measure. There was more of kingly seeming gathered round that mitred ascetic at Ripon than round her royal husband, wherever his court might be. Was anything more wanted to deepen her hatred for the holy man? A keener grief, if it were possible, was yet to be added to her covetousness and pride. Her deportment was not such as became a queen, and Wilfrid told her so. He rebuked her for her levity, and Wilfrid's rebukes were not likely to be less severe and plain than is called for by wickedness in high places. The indignant queen could now hardly contain herself, and going into Egfrid's presence she taunted him with being but the second man in his kingdom. "Look at his riches," said she; "look at his retainers of high birth, his gorgeous vestments, his jewelled plate, his multitude of obedient monasteries, the towers and spires and swelling roofs of all his stately buildings; why, your kingdom is but his bishopric." Ermenburga was like the world; to the world's eye this was what a churchman

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looked like in Catholic ages; yet the world's eye sees untruly. The gorgeous vestments, the jewelled plate—these are in the Church of God, the sanctuary of the pious poor; outside of that is the hair-shirt, and then the iron girdles, and the secret spikes corroding the flesh, and the long weals of the heavy discipline, and the horny knees, and the craving thirst, and the gnawing hunger, and the stone pillow, and the cold vigil. Yet does the world exaggerate the churchman's power? Nay, it cannot take half its altitude; his power is immeasurably greater, but it does not reside, not a whit of it, in the vestments or the plate, in the lordly ministers or the monkish chivalry, but in the mystery of all that apparel of mortification just enumerated, that broken will and poverty of spirit to which earth is given as a present possession, no less than heaven pledged as a future heritage. The Church is a kingdom, and ascetics are veritable kings.

But the devil gives wisdom to his servants, wisdom of his own kind. Egfrid and Ermenburga did not attempt alone the dangerous and invidious task of expelling the Saint from his diocese. They went to work with deepest sagacity. In 673, St. Theodore held a synod at Thetford;[1] Wilfrid attended only by his proxies, and it has been conjectured[2] that his reason for not attending, was his suspicion that the archbishop would attempt to carry some decree to his prejudice. Now St. Theodore had set his heart upon dividing the great English sees, and

[1] Hertford, some say.

[2] By Mr. Peck, Hist. of Stamford, Book ii. p. 26.

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multiplying the number of bishops. A very good object it was, yet the holy man showed some little want of faith, and alas! a very great want of justice in the manner of carrying out his plan. In fact, we may as well say at once, that, turn the history which way we will, we cannot make out even a shadow of an apology for St. Theodore, except what is, after all, the best apology, his subsequent undisguised repentance and earnest seeking for reconciliation with Wilfrid. Of the ten chapters or decrees of the Synod of Thetford we need make no mention, except of the ninth, which, in St. Theodore's own words, ran thus: That as the faithful increase, more bishops be made; *but on this article, for the present we concluded nothing.* It is clear, therefore, that the Synod of Thetford gave the Primate no power to divide sees; and if St. Theodore conceived that his legatine authority enabled him to do this, then it was surely something like an unworthy subterfuge to bring the matter into discussion at all at Thetford. And, moreover, the Holy See would be most unlikely, from its known moderation and reverence for the ancient canons, to permit the division of bishoprics, and the intrusion of new bishops against the will of the existing prelates. Under any circumstances, Theodore could not divide Wilfrid's diocese *canonically*, except with Wilfrid's assent, which he did not even ask.

But Egfrid knew how strongly the archbishop of Canterbury felt upon this subject. Soon after the Synod of Thetford, Bisi, the bishop of the East Angles, had become hopelessly infirm; and Theodore, instead of consecrating one coadjutor, ap-

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pointed two, dividing the old diocese into the two new ones of Dunwich and North Elmham. The Northumbrian king, therefore, under pretext of zeal for the Church, represented to St. Theodore that the diocese of York was too unwieldy to be adequately governed by one bishop, and at the same time so rich that it could easily support three. Together with this representation, Egfrid sent grievous complaints of Wilfrid's pride, tyranny, and luxury, and (though we are ashamed to add what truth requires) promised ample gifts to the archbishop if he would depose Wilfrid. Theodore, as he journeyed to England, had spent some time with Bishop Agilbert at Paris, and had asked of him information and advice respecting the English Church; Agilbert was the consecrator of Wilfrid, had ordained him priest, and made him spokesman at the Council of Whitby; surely what he said of Wilfrid might have given Theodore great confidence in the man of God. Theodore had deposed St. Chad on Wilfrid's behalf, and he had interfered with Wilfrid's austerities with an affectionate peremptoriness, and made him ride on horseback, and taken a meek pride in lifting the Bishop of York upon his horse; would he not require uncommon proof of Wilfrid's pride and luxury and tyranny? Alas, for St. Theodore! Like many other men, he had ascertained to himself the goodness and the greatness of a favourite end, the division of the bishoprics; he had some reason to know that Wilfrid would object to the parcelling out of his hard-won diocese of York, and so—he fell. It was not the presents which tempted him; no, Theodore's

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whole life will never allow such an accusation to be credible; it was his impatience to carry out his favourite scheme of Church reform which drew the holy Primate into Egfrid's base and cunning snare.

Perhaps it is only just to St. Theodore to state his plan of reform, and show how needful it was; and this we cannot do better than by borrowing the words of a modern historian.[1]

"The extensive authority which Pope St. Gregory conferred on Augustine appears to have been personal: it was not exercised, perhaps not claimed, by his immediate successors. But when, in 654, Pope Vitalian elevated Theodore of Cilicia to the dignity vacant by the death of Deusdedit, the sixth archbishop, the same jurisdiction was revived in favour of the new Primate. Theodore was a man of severe morals, and of great learning; but the consideration which, above all, led to his choice, was his extensive acquaintance with the canons, and his unbending firmness. By all the Saxon prelates he was recognised as the head of the English Church. But after his death, and under his immediate successors, some of these prelates aspired to independence. The first was Egbert of York, brother to the king of Northumbria, who appealed to the Pope for the restoration of the archiepiscopal honours of his see,—honours which, as we have before intimated, were reserved to it by the decree of St. Gregory the Great. The disasters of which Northumbria had been the theatre by the

[1] Dunham, iii. 305.

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frequent invasions of the pagans, and the partial apostacy of the province, had doubtless forfeited the metropolitan character of York; we may add, that it could have had no suffragans beyond the fleeting prelates of Hexham, and the remote ones of Lindisfarne. But now that tranquillity was for a season restored, and that there appeared an opening for the erection of new sees, a papal decree severed from the immediate jurisdiction of Canterbury all the sees that existed, or might hereafter exist, north of the Humber. This was a triumph to the Northumbrian king, who could not have beheld with much complacency the subordination of his bishops to the subjects of the kings of Kent. The same jealousy seized on Offa, king of Mercia, who felt that he was more powerful than either of his brother sovereigns, and who declared that his kingdom was as deserving of a metropolitan as either Northumbria or Kent. His application, too, was successful, and Lichfield was acknowledged as a spiritual metropolis by the bishops of Mercia and East Anglia. We are not told what motives induced Kenulf, the successor of Offa, to restore to the cathedral of Canterbury its jurisdiction over the central provinces of England; but after a short opposition on the part of Leo, the reigning pontiff, the metropolitan of Lichfield descended to the rank of a suffragan bishop; and from that period the precedency of the Kentish see has been firmly established. Originally the Saxon dioceses were of enormous extent, nearly commensurate with the kingdom of the heptarchy:—thus that of Winchester embraced the kingdom of the West Saxons, extend-

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ing from the confines of Kent to those of British Cornwall. Mercia, extensive and populous as it was, had but one bishop; but greater than all was the jurisdiction of the Northumbrian prelate, who, from his cathedral of Lindisfarne or York, presided over all the Christian congregations of the Saxons and Picts from the Humber to the Forth and the Clyde. To suppose that any individual could be equal to the government of districts so vast, is absurd; yet no serious attempts were made to remedy the evil, until Theodore was invested with the Primacy. The first step of that able man was to divide Mercia into five sees,—Lichfield, Leicester, Hereford, Worcester, and Synacester. The deposition of St. Wilfrid enabled him to divide Northumbria into the dioceses of York, Lindisfarne, Hexham, and Withern. His conduct was imitated by his successor; so that within a few years after his death, seventeen bishops possessed the spiritual jurisdiction of England. Wales had its own prelates: Carlisle had also one of British race, independent of the Saxon metropolitans. Subsequently there were some variations both in the number and the seat of these sees: thus Lindisfarne was transferred to Chester-le-Street; and on the death of Tidferth, the last bishop of Hexham, that see was incorporated with Chester-le-Street, and the metropolis was subsequently transferred to Durham. But Northumbria had never its due number of prelates. This evil was felt by the venerable Bede, who asserts that many districts had never seen their diocesan, and that thousands of Christians had never received the Holy Spirit by the im-

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position of hands. He earnestly recommended the adoption of Pope St. Gregory's plan,—that Northumbria should be divided into twelve dioceses, dependent on the metropolis of York; but no steps were seriously taken to forward the views of Pope or monk."

But if St. Theodore urged his favourite scheme with hardly justifiable zeal, is not Wilfrid blameworthy likewise for not at once acceding to the division? It might have been a great humiliation to him as giving a seeming victory to the haughty queen, yet it would have enabled him to maintain a position of usefulness in his native land, and if it was not for the good of the Church, should he not have given way? Is not his resistance just like the rebellious arrogance of Dunstan, Anselm, or Becket?—Certainly: such rebellious arrogance as there was about those three wonderful, most honoured Saints was there likewise about St. Wilfrid: his character is in many respects singularly like that of the blessed St. Thomas à Becket. But Wilfrid knew more than Theodore: he knew, what actually took place in the event, that a royal scheme of Church spoliation[1] was connected with the proposed division of the bishopric. Yet even if it had not been so, we should remember how hardly and by steps St. Wilfrid had won that huge diocese to Christ, and had brought it into happy

[1] One of the causes of Egfrid's dislike of Wilfrid was the bishop's undaunted opposition to Egfrid's determination forcibly to take away an estate which he had himself formally given to the Church of York. After all, most kings have somewhat of Henry the Eighth's temper in them.

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subjection to Catholic traditions and St. Peter's chair; and there is a singular faculty given like a new sense to honest and hard-working priests; it is the love of souls: and perhaps none but a Saint could adequately measure the affliction which a teacher would suffer in having his spiritual children taken from his guidance and paternal care. The convents and their dependent villages all up the valleys of those wooded streams of the romantic north—they were Wilfrid's creation. There he went preaching and confirming, and receiving confessions, till he loved his spiritual sons and daughters as not one mother in Bethlehem loved her helpless innocents. The accumulated affections —the thousand peasant biographies half known or wholly, by confession or otherwise,—the local ties, —the remembered difficulties of a new foundation or a recent parish—the miracle vouchsafed through him—the answered prayer—the angel-visited Mass —the guiding dream in one place, the spiritual rapture in another—who shall tell the sum of these things? Flesh and blood have no such ties as that betwixt priest and people. Yet do we confess ourselves unable to appreciate all this and think it an unreal poetry? Shame then on our soft-living priests! Were they by the dying bed, or teaching the shepherd boy, or reclaiming the impure youth, or in patient weariness opening the mind of stupid age, were they happy in the life of self-inflicted poverty so as to be bounteous to the poor, were they lowly in attire, and not absorbed amid the gentle-folk, were they the full seven times a day in prayer, with constant services and frequent Sacri-

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fices in their old English churches,—were they all these things rather than such things as they often are, we too should be other than we are, and we should be as willing to praise Wilfrid for clinging to his diocese, as we should be unwilling to leave a flock whom we have loved and for whom we have laboured, to go to greater wealth and higher dignities. Oh when will God give us hearts to live such lives that we may come to understand His Saints?

There is some little difficulty in the history which follows. It seems admitted by all that St. Theodore divided Wilfrid's diocese without consulting him either as to the measure itself or as to the persons intruded upon his flock. But some maintain[1] that the diocese of Lindisfarne, with Hexham severed from it, was left to Wilfrid; and this would make Theodore's conduct somewhat less violent and strange; while others make Hexham and Lindisfarne to have been one diocese conferred on Eata, —and this is more consonant with St. Bede's narrative. But the venerable historian often omits intermediate steps, and it seems more probable that Theodore divided the diocese into four bishoprics, giving York to Bosa, Hexham to Eata, Lindisfarne to Wilfrid, and then Lincolnshire, newly conquered from the Mercians, to Eadhed, whose throne was fixed at Sidnachester, a city passed away, probably from some incommodity in the site, a thing not frequent in the almost inspired choice which the old founders of cities generally made; for, from

[1] With Wharton, Angl. Sac. i. 693.

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certain modern attempts, we might almost suppose, either that men were guided in this matter because of its immense moral as well as physical importance to subsequent ages, or that the choice of sites was a peculiar talent, which has become almost extinct from want of use. The choice of sites in America, for instance, does not seem, by all accounts, to have been made with the mysterious felicity which marked the settlement of the old European cities. However, Sidnachester is gone, and Gainsborough is come into its place, and it is probable the new town is not many miles removed from the site of the old city.

Supposing this to be the true account of the matter, Theodore's conduct was plainly uncanonical, inasmuch as Wilfrid was never consulted, and if the archbishop acted thus on the strength of his legatine jurisdiction, it was unwarrantable, as being uncongenial with the spirit of the court of Rome, and, as the event proved, sure to be discountenanced there. Moreover, there was a peculiar harshness, all things considered, in giving York to Bosa, and sending Wilfrid to the old see of Lindisfarne, the revival of York's episcopal honour being part of Wilfrid's system, of his Romanising movement. We can understand modern writers blaming Wilfrid for having brought the Church of his country more and more into subjection to Rome. Certainly, it is true that he materially aided the blessed work of riveting more tightly the happy chains which held England to St. Peter's chair,—chains never snapped, as sad experience tells us, without the loss of many precious Christian things.

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Wilfrid did betray, to use modern language, the liberty of the national Church; that is, translated into Catholic phraseology, he rescued England, even in the seventh century, from the wretched and debasing formality of nationalism. Such charges, however ungraceful in themselves, and perhaps downright heretical, are, at least, intelligible in the mouths of Protestant historians; but it is obvious that Theodore could have no objection to Wilfrid on the score of his Romanising, for the holy archbishop was himself the very presence of great Rome in this island of ours. So that it really was almost a piece of inventive cruelty, of gratuitous harshness, to send Wilfrid to Lindisfarne, and install Bosa in the cathedral of St. Paulinus, with Wilfrid's roof, and Wilfrid's windows, and the beautiful columns which Wilfrid purged of the damp green moss.

Wilfrid's first step, when he was officially informed of this arbitrary act, was to consult the neighbouring bishops, who seem to have advised resistance. Accordingly, he appeared before the king in council,[1] and complaining of the wrong, he quoted the canons of the Church, which forbad all such changes until the bishop of the diocese should have publicly defended the rights of his see; and he laid, as he was likely to do, especial stress on the fact, that kings could not, without sin, take ecclesiastical authority upon themselves at all. Further, he desired that any accusations against himself personally might be brought forward, that he might confront his accusers and establish his

[1] Mr. Smith makes the archbishop present, which is most unlikely from what happened.

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own innocence. The answer of the king and his council was, that they had nothing to lay to his charge, but that they were determined to carry into effect what had been decreed about his diocese. Nothing was further from St. Theodore's thoughts; yet, out of excessive love for his own project, he had swerved from the canons, and the consequence had been, not only much individual suffering and injury, but the opening the floodgates of Erastianism upon the Northumbrian Church, and giving a seemingly legal countenance to an extensive sacrilege in the robbery of vestments, plate, and other Church property. Where an institution is divine, as is the case with the Holy Church, no one knows how much is tied to little things: in religion, especially, mischief is not to be measured by its beginnings.

It was now plain to Wilfrid that his cause was to have no fair hearing in England, and his course was determined upon instantly. The council had openly declared that they had no personal charge to bring against him: from that moment Wilfrid the *man* was put out of sight; the Church was wronged in him, her ancient canons violated, her majesty insulted, her divine rights usurped by a layman who happened to have a crown upon his head; it was Wilfrid the *bishop* who had now to act; and from that moment most wonderful, most refreshing, most worthy of reverential honour and love, is the conduct of the blessed Saint! All personal feeling, all anger, all vindictiveness, all pusillanimity whatsoever, is absolutely put away. He journeys abroad: is he brooding over his

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wrongs? no—his spirit is painfully moved by the idolatry around him: is he impatiently pressing on to Rome? no—he has forgotten himself, and is loitering among the Frisons, teaching them the Gospel: he stands before the Roman court; is he urging the injustice of St. Theodore? no—quite the contrary; speaking honourably of him, begging his own personal wishes may not be consulted, desiring St. Peter's successor to legislate for the Church as he thought best, and he, Wilfrid, was ready, nay, eager, to obey. Never did the grace of God so shine forth in the great Wilfrid as when he was wandering an exile from his own beloved toil-won diocese. Raising the dead was a miracle far short of the wonders of his meek-spirited contentment.

Turning, therefore, to the king, the high-minded prelate, never forgetting due respect, said, "I see that your Majesty has been wrought upon, to my prejudice, by certain factious and malignant persons about you. I appeal, therefore, to the Apostolic See." O blessed See of Rome! was never charm spoken over the tossings of a troubled world like that potent name of thine! What storms has it not allayed! What gathering evils has it not dissipated! what consummated evils has it not punished and undone! what slaveries has it not ended! what tyrannies, local or world-wide, has it not broken down! what smooth highways has it not made for the poor and the oppressed, even through the thrones of kings, and the rights of nobles, and the treasure-chambers of narrow-hearted commonwealths! Rome's name spoken by the widow or the orphan,

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or the unjustly divorced wife, or the tortured serf, or the persecuted monk, or the weak bishop, or the timid virgin—have there not been ages when emperors and kings, and knights and peers, trembled to hear it in their far-off strongholds? All things in the world have promised more than they have done, save only the little, soon-spoken name of Rome, and it has ever gone beyond its promise in the mightiness of its deeds; and is not then that word from God!

The court of Egfrid scorned the name of Rome; but the scorn was not for long. When Wilfrid mentioned Rome, the courtiers burst into open laughter and loud derision. Wilfrid heard the jeers, and felt them. He was a great man, for he never mentioned them at Rome; he left his cause to itself, and sought not to excite feeling where fact was enough. He heard the gibes of the boorish peers of that Saxon princeling; and he spoke one sad sentence more and then left the hall: "Unhappy men! you laugh now to see the churches ruined; but on this very day next year you shall bewail your own ruin." A mournful prophecy was vengeance enough for him, and for the majesty of Rome.

Beautiful was the sunrise on the autumnal woods in the valley of the Tyne, for the month of August was past or just passing, and the leaden roofs of Hexham Abbey glanced brightly amid the partially discoloured boughs; and bright, too, were the silver breakers on the shallow shore of Lindisfarne; but within were mourning, and dismay, and sinking hearts, and wild projects, and then a silent helpless

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sitting still in sorrow when the news was told that Wilfrid was an exile, that the diocese of York was broken up, that strangers were coming to rule the children of the man of God. Perhaps—alas that it should be so!—there was joy in one holy house, St. Hilda's home, on the promontory of Whitby, for vehement, indeed, was her dislike of Wilfrid. St. Hilda was a saintly virgin, but she could not understand Wilfrid; he towered up out of her sight, and she had the strangest possible notions of him. There were misgivings all over England when the news was heard; for there were many, even among the bishops, who did not side with Theodore; indeed, it was by the advice of his brother bishops that Wilfrid had appealed to Rome. Meanwhile the exile turned his back upon the Ure and the Nidd, and sought the frontiers of the Mercian kingdom, and doubtless he passed by his old home at Stamford, that first Benedictine foundation of his, for he found King Ethelred at Peterborough, or Medehampstead, as it was then called. His visit there was brief, and he carried thence a commission from Ethelred to the Pope, to request that he would confirm the liberties, privileges, and immunities of the new abbey. From the top of Peterborough Minster, looking over Whittlesea Mere, the quick eye may light on the octagonal tower of Ely; the miserable region of fen which lies between the two cities St. Wilfrid now traversed, and entering the abbey of Ely, which had been his landmark far off, though the octagon was not built till the fourteenth century, he doubtless received a true Christian greeting from the Abbess Etheldreda.

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The examination of the new buildings, begun at his suggestion, would be deeply interesting to Wilfrid; and he was a man of that elastic temperament that he could throw off the load of his own griefs almost without an effort.

His stay in England was very brief, and he journeyed onward to the sea. What a hopeless journey it seemed; surely it needed a high, hopeful heart to bear him through. Alone, or with one or two of his clergy,[1] he was travelling to Rome, to charge an archbishop and a king, whose messengers would be there with their tale also. It was to be a single-handed fight; where were his patrons, his proofs, his witnesses? the Primate too, a chosen man, and sent from Rome! But Wilfrid knew that Rome was not like other places, so he took heart and went on; and as to evidence, to Wilfrid a canon of the Church was all in all, and canons were thought scarcely less of at Rome, and Wilfrid knew that likewise; and let the world do what it would to him, one thing it could not make him—a dejected man! When Wilfrid approached the shores of England years ago, the elements had seemed to predict his troubles: now he encountered a rough west wind, and that wind had a solemn commission from on High. It saved Wilfrid's life and carried the Gospel to the Frisons. Ermenburga and his English enemies took for granted that Wilfrid would land at the usual French port, which was Quentavic, now St. Josse-sur-Mer, in Ponthieu, and so follow

[1] It appears that Eddi Stephani and Tatbert at least were with him; and as he left some monks in Friesland, probably they too accompanied him from the north.

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the direct road to Rome. Aware of the badness of their cause, they sent letters and presents to the tyrant Ebroin, begging him to spoil Wilfrid, and, if possible, to slay him. But their request had a different effect from what they anticipated. The west wind saved Wilfrid, but in the ensuing year Winfrid, St. Chad's successor at Lichfield, was driven into exile, some say because he would not fall in with a scheme which St. Theodore had for dividing his diocese, and others because he had taken the side of King Egfrid, with whom Ethelred was at war, and, therefore, when the latter became conqueror, he expelled the bishop. However, Winfrid sounded too like Wilfrid: the unlucky bishop of Lichfield landed at St. Josse-sur-Mer, fell into the hands of Ebroin's agents, and was robbed of all that he possessed; so that Egfrid's snare caught one of his own friends instead of his enemy. Meanwhile, early in the autumn, Wilfrid landed safely among the Frisons, the beginner, as it were, of those wonderful missions which rendered the English name so justly dear to the old Germanic Churches.

Thierry III., sometimes called Theodoric, sometimes Theuderic, has suffered the same injustice at the hands of historians as befell St. Bathildis. As that holy queen has been charged with the murder of St. Delphinus of Lyons, so has Thierry borne the character of being Wilfrid's base persecutor.[1]

[1] It is not meant to do more here than common historical justice to Thierry. He was a sluggish, pleasure-loving king, and of course it was a grievous sin in one so exalted to delegate his power to another. Yet one is anxious to say what good one can, or remove evil accusations, when a man has become a penitent at last, as Thierry did. The exile of St. Amè seems to have weighed the most heavy on Thierry's

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The inaccuracy has arisen from not distinguishing between the mayors of the palace, the real rulers of the country, and the names of those Merovingian faineants under whom they ruled. In order to clear up St. Wilfrid's journey, it will be necessary to go a little into the French history of those early times. The Merovingians, the house of Clovis, ruled France for about two hundred and fifty years; they were a sterile race, and scarcely gave out one great man, and but a few good men, in the long interval between Clovis and Charles Martel. The characteristic of their rule was this—perpetual imbecile war; the empire of Clovis was divided into Austrasia and Neustria; the people of the former spoke German, and were Germans in character and way of life; while the inhabitants of Neustria were romanised Gauls, more advanced than the Austrasians in the effeminacies of civilisation, and therefore behind them in martial intrepidity. The stupidity and sluggishness of the Merovingian sovereigns were such, that in a short time they were but names. The bold, often low-born, adventurers who filled the office of mayors of the palace were the real governors of the country. A little inquiry into the facts of the two cases, an inquiry which need not be made here, will show that St. Bathildis and Thierry III. have not to answer for the murder of St. Delphinus or the persecution of St. Wilfrid. The really guilty person was the renowned Ebroin, whose course we shall briefly sketch. When Sigebert III., king

conscience, if we may judge from his donations to the abbey of Breuil. See the lives of St. Amatus.

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of Austrasia, died, he left his throne to his son, Dagobert II. Grimoald, the mayor, tired of the somewhat clumsy farce of governing under another name, forced the tonsure upon Dagobert, and sent him to a monastery in Ireland. A counter-revolution followed, in which the Austrasian nobles put Grimoald and his sons to death; yet Dagobert was not recalled, but the empire parcelled out into three kingdoms, for three infant princes, children of Clovis II. Neustria fell to Clothaire III., Austrasia to Childeric II., and Burgundy to Thierry III. In 670, eight years before Wilfrid's exile, Clothaire died, and Neustria was added to the dominions of Thierry. Ebroin was his mayor, an insolent and ferocious man, whom the nobles feared and hated. A revolution took place. In 659 Clothaire and St. Bathildis had called St. Leger from his abbey in Poitou, and had made him Bishop of Autun, and prime minister; at the death of Clothaire, St. Leger defended Childeric against Thierry, as the rightful heir; but, as we have seen, Ebroin carried the day. The revolution which followed appears to have been mainly the work of St. Leger. Childeric was acknowledged king of Neustria, and Ebroin's life was only saved by St. Leger's intercession. The mayor was tonsured, and put into St. Columban's abbey of Luxeuil, and Thierry into the abbey of St. Denys. So long as Childeric followed St. Leger's advice he reigned happily; but, falling into a dissolute manner of living, and ill brooking the stern admonitions of the bishop, he confined St. Leger also at Luxeuil with Ebroin, who there reconciled himself with

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the bishop. In 673 another revolution followed, and Childeric was slain, St. Leger restored to his diocese, and Dagobert II. recalled from his monastery in Ireland. Ebroin likewise escaped from the cloisters of Luxeuil at the same time, and, finding that his post was filled up by Leudesius, he murdered him, and then set up a pretended son of Clovis for king. He invaded Burgundy, and first attacked Autun. The romantic siege, the pious heroism of St. Leger, would lead us from our present purpose. Enough that Ebroin conquered; that he tore out St. Leger's eyes, though he owed his life to him; that he ordered him to be left in a thick wood to starve, where he was saved by the pity of Vaimer; then St. Leger was dragged through a marsh, and over a stony road, till the soles of his feet were cut in pieces. Ebroin then split his tongue, and cut his lips off, and finally had his head cut off in the forest of Iveline, since called St. Leger's wood. Ebroin, making himself master of the person of Thierry, was restored to his post as mayor of the palace, and reigned till he was assassinated by one of his own creatures, a merited end to a life of such manifold atrocities. Thus, at the period of Wilfrid's journey, Thierry III. was nominal king of Neustria and Burgundy, and Ebroin the real governor, who sought the Saint's life; whereas Austrasia was ruled by Dagobert II., the Irish monk, who had been Wilfrid's guest in England.[1] Alas! what awful materials for the Last

[1] Alford, and Cressy after him, make Thierry, not Dagobert, to have been Wilfrid's guest, and to have been exiled into Ireland. The only proof they bring is that Thierry was king of the Franks at this

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Judgment does this single page of French history exhibit! Surely there is something depressing in the study of secular history, which sends us for relief to the lives of the Saints, the marvellous power of grace Divine, the heavenly chapter of the world's chronicle, the one bright aspect of the melancholy past.

Wilfrid, then, by the providence of God was driven on the Frison shore, and unexpectedly beheld a new field of apostolic labours opened before him. It was yet early in the autumn, and it would have been easy for him to have prosecuted his journey toward Rome; but his spirit was stirred up by the idolatry around him; and the hospitable reception he met with from Adgils, the pagan king of the country, would increase his desire to bring him and his people to the knowledge of the Gospel. Labour was almost a luxury to Wilfrid; he could not sit still for ever so short a while. Some Saints there have been who have served God in hermitages, contemplating the Divine love, and in ascetic silence, or in the desert, not responsive to their vocal praise, have offered such poor homage as they might to the adorable perfections of the Ever-blessed Undivided Trinity; others there have been, restless men, strong-handed and stout-hearted, who cope with difficulties, war upon the world with a seeming wantonness, and whose energy seems like a habit, not spent by age, but

time; they do not seem to know of the partition of the country. Cressy says that Dagobert was dead before this. He is thinking of Dagobert I., who died in 638; Dagobert II. was not assassinated till after Wilfrid's journey, about 680, a little before Ebroin, who undertook to revenge his death.

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reinforced by use; and these reform Churches, and exorcise the evil spirits from pagan nations, and strangle high-minded heresies, and break in pieces civil powers when they have become, through vastness or corruption, nuisances to the world. Wilfrid was one of this latter class. He loved the Frisons for their free hospitality; his spirit rose as he stood in the manifest presence of the Evil One misleading these poor heathen to their ruin: so he put off his griefs as a pilgrim unbuckles his wallet, and he girded himself up gallantly to the rough work of a missionary. Whoever saw that active Englishman flying, rather than travelling, up and down the Frison tribes, arguing with pagan priests as undauntedly as he would have preached in Hexham Abbey, rebuking the rude nobles for their wassail or their lust with as calm an assumption of power as if he were imposing a penance in chapter at Ripon, preaching in the fields, catechising in the villages, baptizing multitudes in the rivers of the country, eating and sleeping one could scarcely tell when or where—whoever saw him would have supposed him to be a man who had nothing else to think of but his Frison converts, no cares, no ties, no duties, beyond what were to be seen, and a wonder it might be how he even got through those in the masculine way he did. Yet he was an exiled bishop, he had an intricate cause to plead at Rome, and he was to get thither through the daggers of assassins as best he could. All this was nothing to Wilfrid; God gave him no rest; the Saint sought it not, loved it not; rest did not suit him; peace is out of place here, for if we have too much

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of it now, we have less of it hereafter. And are we not taught at Nones on a Confessor's feast, Honestavit illum in laboribus, et complevit labores illius?

If it had pleased God—there is no record that it did so—to give Wilfrid the fore-knowledge so often imparted to the Saints, and indeed imparted to Wilfrid himself when he prophesied Prince Elfwin's death, the spirit of the bishop might have been supported by seeing the destined triumph of the Gospel in those parts through the apostolic labours of English missionaries. It is not our place to tell of Willebrord, and Boniface, and Werenfrid, and all the galaxy of Saints who were the companions and coadjutors of Boniface. St. Eligius of Noyon had been in Friesland even before Wilfrid, and the seed that Wilfrid sowed sprang up indeed, and doubtless souls were saved, and the first fruits of the Frisons gathered into heaven. Yet his work seemed to pass away; the nation was not thoroughly evangelised; indeed how could it be in his short stay? But Wilfrid was connected with the future conversion also of the brave and hospitable Frisons. In 665, the year after his consecration at Compiegne, there came to Ripon a Northumbrian named Wilgis, and his wife was with him. Wilgis was a holy man, and when left a widower, became a monk, and finally a hermit. But now the pious pair had brought to the abbey gate a child seven years old, and committed him to Wilfrid's keeping, and Wilfrid had left him at Ripon a goodly young monk, now twenty years of age. The young monk was Willebrord, the great apostle of Friesland: how far were his labours owing to what

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he learned of Wilfrid? It was in the same year of Wilfrid's exile, probably in consequence of his departure, that Willebrord left Ripon, and going over to Ireland, joined St. Egbert, of whom we have already spoken. Thus there is scarcely a page of holy history in those times without Wilfrid's name appearing in it. He had put himself at the head of a daring movement, and it was likely therefore that his influence would be felt everywhere. Christmas came; how dreary were the mouths of the Rhine, and the wild flats around in that bleak season; yet there was less bleakness that winter among the Frisons than there ever had been heretofore, since they came across the Rhine and turned the warlike Catti out of those swampy seats of theirs. There was less bleakness that year, for round many a hearth were Christians keeping Christmas—a new thing in the land, a new word in the Frison tongue.

But the evil spirits which the man of God cast out of the Frisons entered into the heart of Ermenburga, and quickened her envy and her hatred. At her instigation and for her promised bribes Ebroin, who in that very year, perhaps in October, had slain St. Leger, determined to compass Wilfrid's destruction. Probably he knew not how that holy man had once been within his power; that he, the potent prelate who was even in exile disquieting kings and queens, was the same young Englishman who stood stripped for execution at the martyrdom of St. Delphinus. Things take strange turns; but Wilfrid was preserved a second time. Ebroin sent a letter to King Adgils, promising with an oath to

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give him a bushelful of gold pieces, if he would send him Wilfrid, alive or dead. When the letter came it was winter, and Adgils was giving a lordly feast in his palace. Wilfrid was there, and so was Eddi Stephani, the precentor. The king desired the letter to be read in the hearing of all. The contents were startling; Eddi Stephani might fear, though we know not that he did; Wilfrid, on whom all eyes were fixed, lifted up his soul to God and was calm, as calm as strenuous men always are when calmness is courage. When the letter was finished, the king desired to have it put into his hands; no sooner had he received it than the indignant barbarian tore it in pieces, and threw it on the blazing hearth: "Go," said he to the messenger, "go, and tell your lord that I spoke thus. In such manner may the Creator of all things rend and destroy the power and life of the perjurer and the traitor, and consume him to ashes!" Thus did the Frison king repel the foul temptation to stain his honour and break the covenant of hospitality.

When the spring came, Wilfrid bethought himself once more of Rome, and taking leave of Adgils, pursued his journey; he had more companions probably than Eddi, unless the precentor's *we* stands only for his bishop and himself. Passing through part of Thierry's dominions, and providentially escaping all the snares laid for him, he entered Austrasia, the kingdom of Dagobert II. That prince on his return from Ireland, when recalled to his throne, had crossed England, and had been received and hospitably entertained by Wilfrid at Ripon or elsewhere. A forgetfulness of good

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turns, though common to kings, does not seem to have formed part of Dagobert's character. Indeed, Wilfrid's hospitality had been, like everything about him, most princely. He had not been contented to lodge and feast his foreign guest, but he had provided him with horses and attendants to accompany him to his own country. Indeed, if Eddi's account be strictly true, so great had Wilfrid's reputation been beyond the seas that, when Dagobert was recalled, the embassy was sent to Wilfrid desiring him to take the prince out of the Irish monastery where he was, and send him home. Possibly, though only made a monk by compulsion, there might have been some ecclesiastical difficulty in the matter, and the intervention of a powerful and honoured bishop might be useful. Dagobert received his ancient host with royal hospitality, and the see of Strasbourg being then vacant, the most important diocese in his kingdom, he pressed Wilfrid to accept it. But Wilfrid had clearly ascertained to himself his own vocation. In younger days he had almost wonderfully divined the work he was to do, and past experience had satisfied him as to the position which it was his duty to maintain towards the Church of his times. There was another reason, too, which might weigh with him against accepting the bishopric of Strasbourg. He had found the English Church in the most deplorable state of Erastian subjection to the civil power. Through his own labours and through the energy of St. Theodore England was beginning to be convalescent, whereas the French Church, under the Merovingian dynasty, was in quite a

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fearful state of servility. Language can scarcely be found adequate to describe the miserable and apparently hopeless corruption of the French Church in this respect. One is shocked at finding even the blessed Saints carried away by the stream, and addressing incestuous murderers with an adulation absolutely disgraceful. The letter of St. Avitus of Vienne to Gundebald of Burgundy, the conduct of St. Pretextatus of Rouen with regard to the infamous Brunehild, the flattery of St. Fortunatus of Poitiers to the execrable Fredegund, called the female Nero,—these things show how deeply the spirit of slavish deference to worldly power had eaten into the very heart of the Gallican Church. The spirit of St. Babylas and St. Ambrose had ceased to exist among the French prelates: but it had not died out in the Church. France itself was amazed at the cheering exhibition of it in the truly great St. Columban, the Irishman. The plain-spoken sternness, the vehement denunciation, the cutting rebuke, the overawing intrepidity of that wonderful man towards Thierry II. and Brunehild stood out in strange contrast with the obsequious humility and abject demeanour of the French bishops. But it was not till the ninth century, or the latter half of the eighth, that the Gallican Church displayed the noble independence, the boldness towards ungodly rulers, which were for so long its honourable distinction. It was not likely then that Wilfrid would leave a work half accomplished, and enter upon it afresh under greater disadvantages in a country not his own. Doubtless he looked forward to the result of his

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appeal to Rome as a means of helping on the great work of freeing his native Church from its degrading thraldom. Dagobert does not seem to have taken Wilfrid's refusal amiss. He forwarded him honourably on his journey to Rome, giving him one of his bishops, Deodatus, as a companion.[1]

Wilfrid now passed on into Italy, and entered the Lombard kingdom. But the emissaries of Ermenburga had been before him: would that virtue were as unsleeping as wickedness always is! Bertari, or Berthaire, was at that time the sovereign of the country,[2] and is described as a humble and quiet man, and one who *trembled* at God's word. Lombardy was no doubt an interesting country to Wilfrid. Its Bavarian rulers, and especially Aripert, were Catholics, and had done much towards the conversion of their heretical subjects. Bertari had been expelled from his kingdom by Grimoald, the duke of Benevento; but the usurpation, though cruel, proved a happy one to the Lombards, as Grimoald completed their conversion, and established close relations between the Pope and his people. During his exile, Bertari had been the guest of the great khan of the Avars, in Hungary, who was a pagan. When Wilfrid first arrived, Bertari, it is said, received him with a frowning countenance, being strongly prepossessed against him by the representations of his English enemies: but when Wilfrid

[1] Episcopus Tullensis, Mabillon calls him. He subscribed the acts of the Roman Council under Agatho. See Spelman in Conc.

[2] He is called by Eddi King of Campania: but see Professor Leo of Halle's Hist. of Italy, i. 90, *et seq.*, and Mabillon. Obs. præv. xiv. in Vit. S. Wilf. Cressy turns Campania into Champaigne, which province does not seem to have belonged to the Lombards.

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had stated his case, Bertari was not contented with mere hospitality, but did all he could to enable him to bring the matter to a favourable issue. As the remembrance of past hospitality had been the cause of Dagobert's great kindness, so hospitality in exile had softened Bertari's heart, and made him merciful to strangers. "Your enemies have sent messengers to me from Britain," said he to Wilfrid, "saluting me, and promising me great gifts if I would seize a bishop of theirs clandestinely flying to the Apostolic See, and hinder his journey thither. But I refused so wicked a proposal, telling them that I was once, in the days of my youth, an exile from my country, when I passed my time with a certain king of the Huns, who made a covenant with me, in the name of his idol god, that he would never betray me, or give me up to my enemies. After a while ambassadors came from my enemies to the pagan king, promising him a bushel of gold pieces if he would allow them to slay me; but he consented not, saying, 'Doubtless, my gods would cut off my life if I did this wickedness, seeing I have made a covenant by my gods.' How much more then should I," added Bertari, "who know the true God, refrain from losing my soul for the gain of even the whole world?" Thus Wilfrid was dismissed from the Lombard court with great honour and a princely escort.

Did the holy bishop travel on foot like a pilgrim? He only rode in Yorkshire when St. Theodore compelled him; did he return to his mortifying ways, when this was no longer enjoined upon him? Or, out of consideration for Deodatus, did he travel on horseback, for the affectionate alacrity of Eddi

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would be overjoyed to suffer any hardship in company with Wilfrid? On horseback or on foot doubtless they travelled like pilgrims; the psalter was not forgotten, and Eddi, too, the chanter, with them; it was an itinerant choir in itself; that little band that went on with Wilfrid to the fountain of hope, strength, and justice, St. Peter's chair. In the tenth century we read of monks singing the office on horseback, and so protecting themselves from that dissipation of mind which the ever-varying show of outward objects would be likely to produce. What a great part of practical religion is an habitual self-recollection, and of all habits none is so difficult to acquire, none requires to be formed with more scientific method! Meditation itself is a thing to be learned, and learned piece by piece, like a foreign language; otherwise, it is nothing better than a vague movement of the mind through a shifting series of pious moods, neither bracing the will nor inflaming the affections, but enervating both. The high mountains and the shady woods, the flowery pastures and the bending brooks, the summer scents and the blue dome of sky, the marches of the beautiful clouds and the witchery of light and shade,—we think it something to have our minds filled with these as we travel, and to connect them with the thought of Him from whom all beauty emanates. Nay, it is well if, by His grace, we do contrive to raise our love of natural objects above the low level of mere unreal poetry; but the monks, surely, did far better. It does not appear that they were not susceptible of natural beauty, but certainly these men, the most sensitive, tender-hearted of their

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kind, do not appear to have thought much of such things. They were collected in the thought of God; the Passion of our Lord, the Dolours of His Blessed Mother, the sobering aspects of the Four Last Things,—these were the objects of their contemplations; and they sufficed. They had not room for more; outward shows were distracting, so they sang psalms as they journeyed, that they might not see them. Thus we read of Odo of Clugni crossing the Cottian Alps with Gerald, bishop of Riez, and they chanted psalms as they rode, and if the chanting was interrupted, it was, not to praise God for some outward beauty, but to serve Him by some heroic act of lowliness and charity.[1] Alas!—it must be said—there is but little religion in poetry, because there is so little reality: the truth of poetry is the truth of expression. Poetry does not readily commute itself into action; how far, then, is it from a wise or holy truthfulness! Men should beware of loving outward nature overmuch: it is an ensnaring thing, more ensnaring than they think. There is a show of something very devotional about pantheism, a cheap praise of the Most High, which is far indeed from prayer; men would have it serve, and the world is glad it should pass current for such, as an equivalent for submission to mysterious dogmas and obedience to actual commands. What led to idolatry once, is leading to pantheism now. Job deemed it a thing to repent of, if so be a man had transgressed that way, when his heart was secretly enticed at beholding the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness.[2] Let this caution

[1] See Maitland's Dark Ages, p. 301. [2] xxxi. 26, 27.

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be forgiven, though it sound so unpoetical; it may be needed, where the need is not suspected.

Doubtless, then, Wilfrid and his band chanted as they rode. By the reedy moats of Mantua, and the hazy plain of Bologna, over the fractured sides of the Apennines, by the margin of the blue Bolsena, and over the treeless, misty, discoloured pastures of the Campagna, the little band went on. They chronicled not (so we conjecture) sunsets and glorious storms, or the cool liberty of vernal evenings, but they sang the Psalms of David, and the hymns of Western Christendom, and spoke of the science of the Saints, of sin, temptation and austerities, and mourned or rejoiced over the fortunes of the Church, and fortified each other against the then reigning heresy of the Monothelites, and did good in untiring ways as they went along. One obvious subject there was which we think was little heard of, and therefore by the rest the more thought of, and that was Wilfrid's wrongs. And so the bishop of York, beyond his former hopes, entered a second time the ancient gates of Rome.

With what words can we better speed St. Wilfrid into that great and good city than with those which Alcuin, the famous Yorkshireman, addressed to Archbishop Ethelhard of Canterbury,—for Wilfrid's life had shown that he had monished himself in like fashion, and in his human measure had lived up to his own admonition. "Think," writes Alcuin to Ethelhard,[1] "think of thy renowned predecessors, the teachers and lights of all Britain. While thou

[1] Alcuin ap. Dunham, ii. 252.

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worshippest amidst their holy relics, thou canst not fail to be assisted by their intercessions, so long as neither the pleasures of the world allure, nor the fear of kings terrifies thee from the path which they trod. Never forget that thy throat should be the trumpet of God, thy tongue the herald of salvation to all men. Be a faithful shepherd, not a hireling; a ruler, not a subverter; a light, not darkness; a fortress defended by firm trust, not a house built on sand; a glorious warrior of Christ, not a vile apostate; a preaching, not a flattering, priest. It is better to fear God than man; to please Him rather than the other. For what is a flatterer except a smooth-tongued enemy? he destroys both himself and his hearer. Thou hast received the pastoral rod and the staff of brotherly affection, with that to rule, with this to console, to the end that the sorrowful may be comforted, the obstinate chastised by thee. The power of the judge is to kill, thine to make alive. Why fearest thou the sword of man, seeing that thou hast received from Christ the key of the kingdom? Remember that He suffered for thee; fear not to speak for Him. Through love of thee He hung pierced with nails on the Cross; wilt thou, in thine elevated seat, be silent through fear of man? Not so, my brother, not so! In the same manner as He hath loved thee, love thou Him! He who most labours will receive the greatest reward. If thou suffer persecution through preaching the word, what more desirable? since God Himself hath said, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Be a comforter to the

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wretched, a father to the poor, to all affable. Let thine hand be liberal in almsgiving; promptly give, reluctantly receive. Remember that a priest is the messenger of the most High God, and that the holy law must issue from his mouth. Comfort the weak-hearted, invigorate the dejected, bring back the wanderers into the way of truth, instruct the ignorant, monish the knowing, and let your lives be the best teachers."

There sat upon the chair of St. Peter, at this time, a Sicilian monk named Agatho. He had scarcely worn the tiara, when Wilfrid entered Rome. It must now have been, at the earliest, quite the end of July, or, perhaps, and it is more likely, August was some way advanced. We learn this, and it has a peculiar interest in Wilfrid's life, quite incidentally; for we are told that Agatho had not been long on the throne, when Wilfrid arrived at Rome. Now Pope Donus died on the 11th of April 679, and we learn by the records of the pontiffs, that the see was vacant two months and a half; so that Agatho could hardly be elected before the 25th of June, and then there were sundry ceremonies of consecration, enthronisation, and the like; so that we may well conclude that it was in reality about the close of August 679 that Wilfrid came to the threshold of the Apostles. And why is it interesting to know this?

We remember an August day whose bright dawn stole up the tinted woods of Hexham and glanced among the breakers of Lindisfarne, and that dawn was overclouded by the bad news it brought, that the light of the north was withdrawing into exile.

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We remember an August day when a bishop of York stood before the king and council of Northumberland, and the bishop spoke of Rome, and the king scoffed, and the witless nobles laughed unmannerly and loud, and the bishop prophesied evil things of that same August day next year. The twelve moons had waned, and the sun shone on the white walls and the low-browed gates of York where the bishop was not: he was far away, mayhap entering the gates of Rome. And there was a sad sound of sorrow from gate to gate in York, silence among the rich, lamentations among the poor. A battle had been fought on the Nottinghamshire side of the Trent, and Egfrid and his Northumbrians had been defeated by Ethelred and the Mercians; and Lincolnshire, whose Church Egfrid had torn from Wilfrid, was now torn from his kingdom by the wrath of God; and that prince, young Elfwin, beloved beyond all princes, beautiful and gallant, and but eighteen years of age,—he was slain, and his corpse was brought in through the gates of York that day, while the people wailed in the town, and the monks prayed in the cathedral of St. Paulinus; and here and there a high-hearted churchman, who saw the greatness of his visitation and its cause, muttered to himself Lætata est Ægyptus in profectione eorum, quia incubuit timor eorum super eos; and all, monks and people, thought of August last and the bishop's prophecy, and there was much talk of Wilfrid in the streets of York that night; but the good bishop was far away in the crowd and crossing of time-honoured Rome.

Agatho, the Sicilian monk, was Pope but a short

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time; but his diligence carried him through an immense deal of work for the Church;[1] and during his pontificate the third Council of Constantinople was held, and the Monothelites condemned; and he, like Wilfrid, had a taste for adorning churches, and gathered great sums for the two basilicas of St. Peter's and St. Mary Major's. Wilfrid had now a difficult task before him. He found St. Theodore in high repute at Rome, both naturally and deservedly. Whether St. Benedict Biscop had then left Rome or was just on the point of leaving, we cannot decide; but in that very autumn, Pope Agatha put John, the archchanter of St. Peter's and abbot of St. Martin's, under St. Benedict's escort, and sent him into England to see if the Church there was at all infected with the Monothelite heresy, and to invite St. Theodore to come to the Council his holiness intended to convene at Rome in the ensuing year. In what esteem the Pope held St. Theodore, we may gather from the language of his letter to the Emperors Heraclius and Tiberius regarding this very Council. "Our hope was to have joined to this our assembly our fellow-bishop Theodore, a learned philosopher and archbishop of the great island of Britain, together with other bishops abiding in those parts, and for that reason we have hitherto deferred this Council." Such was the antagonist, indeed enemy, with whom Wilfrid had to cope. His case had excited great interest in Rome, even before his arrival; for Kenwald, a very holy monk, had been there some time

[1] Beaufort, Hist. des Papes, ii. 36.

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with papers from St. Theodore, containing articles of accusation against Wilfrid, and expressed in language of great bitterness. Wilfrid was behindhand. Was it a distrust of the justice of his cause which had made him so backward? No,—the bishop of York had been preaching the Gospel to the poor Frisons. St. Hilda's name, too, was known in Rome, for Rome has an eye and ear far-stretching and capacious as the Universal Church; and the abbess was not content to say her office on the top of her wave-beaten promontory in peace; her messengers were at Rome to make Wilfrid's matters worse. Who shall look for peace in a Church that is militant, whose very Saints war one with another, not because they are not Saints, but because the battle is in the dark?

Wilfrid's horizon was indeed clouded. Wronged men, while they seek for justice, worship it in their thoughts, and deem it near and easy of access: but when they stand at the judgment-seat, that holy power seems veiled; what was clear grows confused; a man distrusts himself, and then loses heart, because he sees that right seldom lies wholly on one side. But Wilfrid was in Rome, and to his ardent mind there was all-sufficient consolation in that simple fact. He knew even then what we know still better—what Rome is in the long run, how her spirit runs itself clear of perversions and defilements, and temporary disturbances. In front of the great basilica of the Prince of the Apostles stands a huge obelisk, which typifies the world, and it is surmounted by a cross containing certain relics of the True Cross, and the inscription is the third

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Antiphon at Lauds and Vespers on Holy Cross Day, "Ecce Crucem Domini! fugite, partes adversæ, vicit leo de tribu Juda, radix David, Alleluja!" *On the whole*, is not this a very truthful allegory of the past history of the Holy See? If things have gone amiss, and at times looked dark for a while, was there not after all both history and prophecy in the notice Rienzi posted on the door of San Giorgio in Velabro, the Church of England's patron Saint, on Ash Wednesday, 1347, "In breve tempo li Romani torneranno al loro antico buono stato?" The Congregation of our Lady of Weeping prays in that Church now.

Which of the seven basilicas or fifty-four parish churches of Rome answers to the description of the church of St. Saviour, of Constantine, we do not know; perhaps San Clemente on the Esquiline, or San Pietro in Montorio, above the Tiber. However, of such importance did Pope Agatho deem Wilfrid's case, that he convened a special synod of fifty bishops and abbots to decide upon it, and they held their session in the church of St. Saviour. The authentic report of this Council is given by William of Malmesbury and also by Spelman in his Councils, and is as follows.[1]

"In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the twelfth year of the reign of our most pious and glorious emperor, Constantine the Elder,[2] and his brethren our new-made emperors, Heraclius and Tiberius, in the seventh Indiction, in the month of October, Agatho the most blessed Pope of the Catholic Church presiding: the most

[1] Spelman, i. 158, ap. Cressy, xviii. 4. [2] Pogonatus.

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holy Gospels being set before in the Church of our Saviour named from Constantine, and together sitting with him these holy and learned bishops as assessors in the present cause, Crescens, bishop of Vinon, Phoberius, Andreas of Ostia, Juvenal of Albano.

"Agatho, the most holy and blessed bishop of the Catholic Church and Apostolic City, said thus to the bishops sitting with him, 'I do not believe that your holy fraternities are ignorant of the cause moving me to call you to this assembly. For my desire is that your reverences would join with me in hearing and treating of a debate lately arisen in the Church of the British Isle, where, through God's grace, the multitude of true believers is increased. A relation of which controversy hath been brought to us, as well by information of persons thence arrived here, as by writings.'

"Then Andrew, the most reverend bishop of Ostia, and John of Porto, said, 'The ordering of all Churches dependeth on the authority of your Apostolic Holiness, who sustains the place of the blessed Apostle St. Peter. But moreover we, by your command, have read unto our fellow-bishops, sitting here with us, the several writings which messengers directed hither from Britain presented to your Holiness: as well as those which certain messengers, a good while since, brought from the most reverend archbishop there, together with the informations of others against a certain bishop who (as they say) is privily slipped away, as also those which were presented by the devout Bishop Wilfrid, bishop of the Holy Church of York, who, having

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been cast out of his see by the forenamed holy archbishop, is come hither. In all which writings, though many questions be inserted, yet we do not find that by any ecclesiastical canons he has been convicted of any crimes, and consequently he was not canonically and legally ejected. Neither do his accusers here present charge him with any naughty acts meriting a degradation. On the contrary it appears to us that, notwithstanding his unjust sufferings, he hath borne himself modestly, abstaining from all seditious contentions. All that he hath done is, that being driven out of his see, the said venerable Bishop Wilfrid made known his cause to his fellow-bishops, and is come for justice to this Apostolic See.'

"Agatho, the most holy and blessed bishop of the Catholic Church and of the Apostolic City of Rome, said to his brethren sitting with him, 'Let Wilfrid, the venerable bishop of the Holy Church of York, who, I am informed, attends at the doors of our cabinet, be here admitted, and bring with him the petition which he is said to have compiled.' The holy Bishop Wilfrid being entered into the venerable cabinet, said, 'I beseech your Holiness, be pleased to command that my petition may be openly read.' The most holy Bishop Agatho said, 'Let the petition of venerable Wilfrid be received and publicly read.' And John, the notary, received and read it to the holy and apostolic Council in tenor following :—

"'I Wilfrid, an humble and unworthy bishop, have at last by God's assistance brought my steps to this supreme residence of apostolic dignity, as to

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a strong tower of safety, whence doth proceed the regulation according to sacred canons to all the Churches of Christ; and therefore I do assure myself that your venerable fraternities, both by my suggestion in writing, and likewise by the discourse which, at my first coming, I made to your Holiness, have been sufficiently informed that certain persons have violently and unjustly invaded my bishopric, without convicting me of any fault, and in an assembly in which were present Theodore the most holy archbishop of Canterbuy and other bishops, they have endeavoured to usurp my see which I had administered for the space of more than ten years; and in my diocese three bishops have been promoted, though their promotion be contrary to the canons. Now, upon what motive or provocation the most holy Archbishop Theodore by his authority without my consent should ordain three bishops in my see, out of reverence to his person, who was sent thither from this Apostolic Chair, I am unwilling to examine. Notwithstanding, if it shall appear that against the rule of ecclesiastical canons, being driven from my ancient see, without any offence committed which is so severely punishable by the said canons, I have for all that been free from all factious tumultuousnesss, and quietly departed away, after I had protested my innocence, and the illegal proceedings against me, before the bishops of the said province, I do here submit myself to your apostolical judgment. If your sentence shall be that I remain deprived, I do with all willingness and humble devotion embrace it. But if you shall think fit that I be restored to my bishopric, this

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one thing I shall only beg of this Apostolic See, that the aforesaid invaders may be expelled from the dioceses which I, though unworthy, have so many years governed. Yet, if you shall judge expedient that more prelates be ordained in the said province of which I have been the sole bishop, I beseech you to take order that such may be promoted there as may be persons with whom I may quietly and peaceably join in the administration of it.'

"After the petition had been read, Agatho, the most holy and blessed bishop of the holy Catholic Church and Apostolic City of Rome, said, 'It is no small satisfaction to this assembly, that in this petition the holy Bishop Wilfrid hath manifested to us, that, though he hath been unduly cast out of his see, yet he never made any obstinate resistance by secular power, but with all humility begged the assistance of blessed St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, withal professing his readiness to submit to whatsoever sentence the same blessed Apostle, from whom we receive our authority, shall pronounce by my mouth.'

"The Sacred Synod, there residing, among other decrees, unanimously consented to this: 'We do ordain and decree, that the holy Bishop Wilfrid be restored to the bishopric which he lately possessed; and that the archbishop shall ordain for his coadjutors such persons as himself shall, with the consent of a synod to be assembled there, make choice of: and as for those persons who in his absence have illegally intruded into his bishopric, let them be utterly expelled from thence. And

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whosoever shall refuse to receive this our decree, let them be interdicted, and let them be anathematised, and stricken by the authority of the blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, whether the offender be bishop, priest, deacon, clerk, monk, or laic.'"

Such was the result of Wilfrid's solemn appeal. The characteristic[1] moderation and discernment of the Roman court are visible throughout. Though its judgment set aside the arbitrary and indefensible use which St. Theodore had made of his legatine jurisdiction, yet no condemnation of the archbishop was recorded, for none was asked; and while the court annulled the division of Wilfrid's diocese, as now arbitrarily made, yet it discerned the wisdom of St. Theodore's project of reform, and provided for the execution of it in a canonical way, and saving the rights of Wilfrid himself. And as to the bishop, how conspicuous is his saintly moderation in his petition! Look at his whole conduct. Connected as he was with the northern nobility as the educator of their children, connected with them so closely as to provoke the royal jealousy, supported in his ecclesiastical views, and in his resistance to

[1] It would be edifying to trace the spirit of the Roman court through all ages and in all departments, and see how a most unworldly, dispassionate moderation has distinguished it. It is quite solemn and overawing. The local inquisition was milder at Rome than elsewhere. The hesitation before approving of a reform in a degenerate order is painful to a reader at first, but on consideration it appears admirably wise and providentially ordered. Surely, when evil has most mingled there, there has been something about that court which earthly measures cannot mete. In truth they who do not see God there, may well suspect Antichrist.

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the legate, by a party among the English bishops, with hosts of ardent monks at his beck, and the Mercian king, his bosom friend, on the frontiers, and his old patron Alfrid, discontented in Ireland, and ready, we may believe, to use any means for gaining the Northumbrian crown—was ever a turbulent ecclesiastic, "arrogant and seditious," "intolerably proud, artful, and insinuating,"[1] in a more favourable position for raising a rebellion against an unjust king, or exciting foreign war? What materials for conspiracy were ready at his hands! What a subtle and commanding intellect, what an untiring personal energy, to make use of them! But the canons were enough for Wilfrid. At any time, but in that strong-handed age especially, Wilfrid's prompt retirement and submission afforded a spectacle as edifying as it was unworldly. His delay for Christ's sake among the barbarous Frisons, his refusal of the bishopric of Strasbourg, the gentleness of his demeanour at Rome, all show a self-restraint and meekness most admirable. There are, indeed, few things in the characters of the Saints more edifying to us of a lawless age, of a nation too much enslaved to its boast of freedom to be really in a high sense free, and of a Church without the show or meagre shadow of a discipline, than the absence of that eagerness of self-justification so painfully

[1] Hutchinson's History of Durham; a work so extremely ignorant on all points at all lying beyond its local subject-matter, as to be of no weight: *e.g.* the author tells us that in those days the names bishop and archbishop were used indifferently; and that St. Theodore, "to conciliate the mind of Oswy," deposed St. Chad, *Oswy's own nominee*, to put in Wilfrid, *whom Oswy had tried to supersede.*

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exhibited by us in every relation of life, and which men have at last come to defend as a moral principle. In plain words, to be Christlike is to be immoral; to do our duty to God by imitating His blessed Son, is to leave undone our duty to the world. Oh, when will it be understood again, that a churchman's duty to the world is to thwart it, to interfere with it, to retard it, to threaten it, to withdraw from it, each as the case may be, and that he only is really a benefactor to the world who so treats it! When will the glory of God, and not the worship of reputation, be the sole excuse for speaking when the noble privilege of calumny falls to our lot! If we do not examine our consciences, we cannot meditate; if we do not meditate, we cannot learn calmness; if we do not learn calmness, how shall we hold our peace at falsehood and under ill treatment; yet, if we speak, how shall we be Christlike?

Very different was Wilfrid's conduct. Could anything be more helpless in appearance than the exiled bishop, with the merriment of Egfrid's vulgar nobles ringing in his ears, traversing hill and dale to get beneath the shadow of the Vatican, king and archbishop against him at home, prejudice and danger abroad? How defenceless do the Saints ever seem upon the earth, a tribe of errant pilgrims, poor, despised, trodden under foot, yet conquering! Like Wilfrid, they seem to lack wisdom; they do not make the best of their positions; their own unpractical resignation perpetuates disadvantages, and when the world condescendingly praises their virtues, it sees no grasp, no compass of mind, no

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largeness of heart, no heavenliness of spirit in what they do. But how dear, not to Saints only, but in a measure to ordinary Christians also, is this defencelessness, this want of visible shelter—for strength resides in weakness; since Christ vouchsafed to lie, an infant, in the manger—to hang, a reputed criminal, on the Cross, and vouchsafes to abide on the altars and in the ciboria of the Church, under the meanness of the sacramental species, awaiting night and day the scanty homage of His cold-hearted people. This new thing upon the earth, this energy of weakness, well weighed, unriddles the whole history of the Church's triumph, and reverses the whole series of the world's judgments upon her.

Wilfrid was now free to enjoy the inestimable privileges of a sojourn at Rome. Whatever doubt there might be, and there was not a little, as to the way in which Egfrid would receive the decree of the Synod, Wilfrid's mind was at ease; and he was able to attain that calm self-recollection needful for visiting the holy places, and reverencing the relics of the countless martyrs which make that city like a vestibule of heaven. Can we doubt that he revisited the oratory of St. Andrew, where his youthful prayer had been answered? But, besides these spiritual enjoyments, for such in truth they are, Wilfrid had business still at Rome. He had to fulfil King Ethelred's commission, and obtain the papal confirmation of the privileges of Peterborough Abbey. Among other things, the same indulgences were granted to those who made a pilgrimage to Peterborough, as to those who went

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to Rome—of course, we must suppose it was only in case age, infirmity, or some other notable cause disabled penitents from undertaking the salutary austerities of the distant pilgrimage. But there is one clause in the charter which makes us greatly suspect a forgery: the abbots of Peterborough are appointed legates of the Holy See for ever, a privilege quite at variance with the uniform honour paid by the Roman court to the throne of Canterbury. In the year following (for Wilfrid stayed over the winter), a council of one hundred and twenty-five bishops was assembled at Rome to condemn the Monothelite heresy, and Wilfrid represented the English Church therein. The Monothelite heresy was at this time ravaging the Church, especially in the East. It had its beginnings about the year 630, partly in a faulty inference from the canons of the Council of Chalcedon, and partly in the crafty practices of some prelates who were Eutychians in secret. It was taught simultaneously from the patriarchal chairs of Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch; and Pope Honorius,[1] if not actually heretical, was misled into favouring the heretics; Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem, was the St. Athanasius of his day. It was fostered by the Exposition of Heraclius, and sheltered by the Formula of Constans; but the pious orthodoxy of Constantine Pogonatus, and the energy of Pope Agatho, obtained its formal con-

[1] Leo II. says Honorius was condemned, not as heretical, but as one "qui flammam hæretici dogmatis, non ut decuit apostolicam auctoritatem, incipientem extinxit, sed negligendo confovit." Baronius is unfair about this.

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demnation in the sixth General Council in Constantinople, which taught two natural wills in Christ, and two natural operations, undividedly, inconvertibly, inseparably, and unconfusedly, according to the doctrine of the fathers. It was to this doctrine that Wilfrid bore witness in behalf of the English Church. His subscription is inserted in this way:[1] "Wilfrid, the devout bishop of York, having appealed to the See Apostolic in a particular cause of his own, by whose authority he was absolved of all accusations, both certain and uncertain, and afterwards called and admitted of this Synod of one hundred and twenty-five bishops, where, in the name of all the Churches in the northern parts of England, and in the isles of Ireland, inhabited by English and Britons, as likewise the nations of the Scots and Picts, he made open profession of the true Catholic faith, confirming it, moreover, by his subscription."

It is a hard thing for a man of the passing generation to grow a part of the new one: it is a hard thing to fix his affections afresh, to keep his place in the change, to continue the old work with new coadjutors, to change his plan of action without shifting the principle. Yet God's grace is sufficient even for this trial: St. John was kept alive for great ends, when his age had passed away; and many of the Saints have had to feel themselves each passing year left more and more alone by the departure of those who understood them, and who aided them. The old work is perpetually to be

[1] Cressy, xviii. 5.

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begun afresh; for the Saints are the schoolmasters of the slow-learning world; class comes after class, and the holy man dwells among weary beginnings, while he himself is inwardly advancing to perfection. It is a hard lot; yet what comes of it? A conviction, which in its depth and strength Saints only know, that God alone is the Supreme Object of our love, and the thought of Him the only helpful stay. "All things come to an end, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad." Wilfrid was growing in years; he was not old, indeed, for he can hardly have been above forty-four, yet he was old enough for the usual changes of the world to begin to tell upon him, old enough for those whom he had brought to Christ to be winning their rest, while his was still delayed. The 23rd of June 679 was a mournful day in the abbey of Ely, while Wilfrid was journeying to Rome. It was a day of sorrow, but of triumphant sorrow; for does not the Church militant gain, rather than lose, when her Saints pass from the comparative impotence of their holy struggle here to the neighbourhood of Christ, and the helpful intercessions made in the presence of the Beatific Vision? St. Etheldreda died that day, and though her successor was a Saint as blessed as herself, yet the gentle daughters of Ely mourned, as nuns and monks alone can mourn, for their mother in the Lord. Perhaps in England's breadth there was not a life so dear to Wilfrid as that of Etheldreda. It was taken from him. The holy bishop's battle was now to grow yearly more and more a single-handed fight; yet not more single-handed than

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the prophet's was, with the spiritual chariots round about him.

Supposing the Roman Council against the Monothelites to have been held, or opened, on Tuesday in Easter week, 680, Wilfrid must have been at least eight months in Rome, and the Pope now bade him return into England, bearing the written decrees of the Apostolic See with him. Some danger attended even his return; for when he had crossed the Alps, he found Dagobert had been slain, and Vaimer, one of Ebroin's creatures, waylaid Wilfrid with an armed band, intending either to slay him or sell him as a slave. It is sad to remember—yet it illustrates the condition of the French Church—that Vaimer was a bishop. Yet he was not bad enough for Ebroin. He excited, as has been already stated, the jealous suspicion of that monster, by showing common humanity to St. Leger; and Ebroin compelled him to be ordained bishop of Troyes, as a means of making him less troublesome. However, even as a bishop we now find him at the head of his armed retainers, waylaying a brother bishop. When he met Wilfrid, he broke out into the most violent language, reproaching him for his former hospitality to Dagobert, whom he denounced as a wicked and abominable tyrant. Wilfrid replied to his charge with such an intrepid meekness that Vaimer's heart was touched. He laid aside his evil purpose, confessed himself a sinner, as many do who yet have not the heart to do penance thoroughly, and finally bade Wilfrid proceed in God's Name and with the help of St. Peter.

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Who could doubt but that St. Theodore would receive with reverential submission the judgment of the Holy See? But we learn a lesson here. A power may be great enough to do an evil which it is impotent to undo. The archbishop had lent himself and his high office to do King Egfrid's evil work; the Saint had at the least swerved from the canons he knew so well, and for the most part observed so strictly. Now that he saw his mistake, he was powerless; he could not move one step towards a reparation of the wrong. The spiritual improvement of his people by the multiplication of dioceses had never been anything beyond a pretext on the king's part. When he derided the court of Rome, he had been sincere; and he was consistent now. Wilfrid had some difficulty even in gaining an audience, and when he did obtain admittance, he found Egfrid surrounded by the bishops hostile to himself. He presented the pope's letters sealed, and Egfrid commanded them to be opened and read. But Wilfrid's patience was now to be put to a new trial, even more difficult to bear than any which he had encountered hitherto. If Egfrid had ventured openly to set at nought the authority of Rome, any honest ecclesiastic might joyfully have confronted persecution; for half the pain of persecution is removed when the goodness of the cause is plain. But England in the seventh century had not come to the wicked boldness of setting Rome at nought. The artful king subjected Wilfrid to a more ingenious torture. He charged him with having obtained the decrees by false representations and by bribery; whereupon he committed the

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bishop to the custody of Offrith, one of his most cruel officers, took his attendants from him, and ordered him to be imprisoned in a dungeon which the daylight could not enter. But even this cruelty did not move the bishop; his countenance did not change as he listened to the unexpected sentence; his thoughts were for his attendants, not for himself; he compassionately exhorted them to patience, assuring them that the goodness of God could not fail shortly to interfere in his behalf.

When it is the Will of God, His Saints find favour in the most unlikely places. The nature of Offrith seemed to undergo a sudden change. The mere contact with goodness operated as a sort of moral miracle. Still brutal to others, still delighting to superadd torments to the common punishment of a prison, to Wilfrid he was quite another being. He durst not so far disobey the king as not to confine the bishop in utter darkness; but in all other respects he mitigated, rather than increased, the horrors of his situation. But it was not only from the sight of goodness that Offrith changed his conduct; coarse spirits are more readily acted upon by wonders, and these God now vouchsafed to work by Wilfrid's hands. The keepers who watched the doors of Wilfrid's gloomy cell, heard him continually reciting the Psalter; and once, while he was thus engaged, they beheld a bright light shining through the crevices of the door. They fled in terror from before the presence of the unearthly splendour; and though Offrith feared greatly at this miraculous illumination of his captive's dungeon, the fear of Egfrid was also strong

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upon him, and he durst not take Wilfrid from his dismal lodging. The Saint needed not a change; where Christ's consolations were most likely to find him out, there was it best for him to be, and it is where the help of man least avails that the Arm of God is put forth most readily and most cheeringly. But this was not all. Offrith's wife was afflicted with a sore disease, which ended in the formation of a large abscess. Her torments were fearful; nor when it burst was she relieved, for the wound remained open, a painful and gaping sore in the middle of her throat. Soon afterwards she had some kind of fit which rendered her speechless, cold, and stiff, as though she had been a corpse. Her husband, believing her at the point of death, ran for Wilfrid, and throwing himself at his feet, like the jailer at Philippi, besought him to pardon him all his severities, and to come to his wife. Wilfrid, having first prayed earnestly, sprinkled some holy water on the sore,[1] upon which the woman was immediately restored, and gave thanks to God. Her name was Ebba; she afterwards became an abbess, and Eddi says she was accustomed with tears to relate this miracle which had been wrought on her behalf.

Offrith now determined to be no longer the king's instrument in the persecution of so manifest a Saint, and having acquainted Egfrid with all that had happened, he desired that Wilfrid might be removed from his keeping. The miserable king seemed given over to a judicial infatuation. The

[1] A similar miracle was wrought by St. Antoninus, abbot of Sorrento.

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spirit of unbelief hardened his heart, so that he became like Pharaoh, a vessel of reprobation. Calling Offrith a faint-hearted coward, he committed Wilfrid to an officer of the name of Tydlin,[1] as to a jailer of unquestionable ferocity. Under his care Wilfrid was removed to the town of Dunbar, where Tydlin was governor. But God was still pleased to witness to the sanctity of His servant by many signs and wonders, the truth of which there does not seem the slightest room for doubting, related as they are by Eddi Stephani, Wilfrid's own companion, and a man of unquestionable piety. Tydlin, casting his victim into a dungeon, ordered his minions to load him with heavy chains. Take the measure as they would, either the fetters were too large and slipped off, or they were too small and would not go on, or if they fitted, rested on the Saint's limbs but for a moment, and then snapped asunder, as if, says Eddi, the feet that went about preaching the Gospel could not be bound, nor the hands that baptized tortured with manacles. Still Wilfrid sang psalms, like Paul of old, for some portion of the apostle's lion-heart was his.

To man's eye how miserable was Wilfrid's lot—darkness, cold, hunger, weariness! How enviable the lot of Egfrid and of Ermenburga! The royal pair, we are told, made continual progresses about their dominions; now they abode in gay cities, now in princely castles. Wassail and the chase were their chief cares. They delighted in pomp, and their progresses were attended with almost

[1] William of Malmesbury confuses the names of the man and the town. See Mabillon's note. Cressy follows Malmesbury in the error.

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more than regal splendour. What could there be to envy in a lot like Wilfrid's? The presence of God's favour, worth more, far more, than sunlight in the darkness of his cell! When Wilfrid received the Pope's order to leave Rome and bear the decrees of the Synod into England, he made a circuit of the holy places, and offered his devotions there, and for the consolation of the Saxon Churches he obtained from different persons the relics of various Saints, which were carefully sealed up, with the name of the Saint written outside. These he brought with him into England, to enrich with the benediction of their presence his native land, an importation of more solid value to the country than countless bales of costly merchandise. He deposited these relics in a chrismary, such as was used for carrying the holy oils, but when he was pillaged by King Egfrid's orders the queen obtained the chrismary and kept it in her chamber, or when she went out hung it round her neck, partly out of superstition and partly as a public trophy over her enemy the bishop. But the Ark of God was a fatal prey to the unholy Philistines, and so were the blessed relics to the ungodly queen, and the Saint himself an afflictive conquest to his conquerors. As Pharaoh had no rest till he let the children of Israel go, so had Egfrid trouble on all sides while he so iniquitously persecuted the man of God. Meanwhile, frequent messengers passed between Wilfrid and the king. Egfrid promised to restore everything which had been taken from him and to give him back part of his bishopric if only he would acknowledge the invalidity of the Roman decrees,

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and confess that they had been extorted by bribes and false representations. But Wilfrid's mind was not enfeebled by his dark dungeon at Dunbar, nor his spirit broken by the savage treatment of the ruthless Tydlin. In suffering for the honour of Rome he regarded himself as confessing Christ; in that faith was his hidden strength. He declared resolutely that he would lose his life rather than subscribe to what was false or say one word in disparagement of the Holy See. For the courtiers of Egfrid had declared that money was all-powerful in the court of Rome, and that any decree whatever might be bought there. This doctrine is not outworn yet, but surely Henry had Church money enough to buy at any cost a divorce from Catherine if such articles were ordinarily saleable at Rome. We in England are so accustomed to the buying and selling of benefices as if they were merchandise, and to the transfer of souls as if they were flocks of sheep, that we think it must needs be so elsewhere. Simony is indeed a blight which the Church for many centuries has not been wholly free from, yet perhaps it has never been so legalised at Rome as it has at Westminster.[1] True, however, it was that Wilfrid had not bought his absolution, and what was not true he would rather die than say. Thus, as in all Wilfrid's actions, Rome is uppermost, Rome first in one shape, then in another; now it comes in the shape of suffering, and Wilfrid acts the con-

[1] Paley is not usually given to take the highest possible views, yet a comparison of his interpretation of simony with what we see and hear of daily is very distressing indeed. The modern hatred of St. Gregory VII. has all the wisdom of an instinct.

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fessor manfully. By no torture, not even the appalling one of darkness, can Egfrid drive the Saint to breathe a word in disparagement of Rome; bribes —even the bribe of a bishopric—are equally unavailing. One little untruth! a mitre were dearly bought at such a price as that.

Still were Egfrid and Ermenburga doing progress over the beautiful shires of the north. There were music, and arms, and banners, and songs, and dancing, and the wine-cup, and Wilfrid in his darkness at Dunbar, not allowed so much as a grate whence he might look out over the wild waters of the Firth; and the king and queen came to rest at Coldingham, for the king's aunt was abbess there. This must have been between St. Adamnan's vision of the destruction of the monastery and St. Ebba's death, which was in August 683 or 684. The royal visitors were probably unwelcome guests in that season of compunction and temporary return to greater strictness, for though monastic hospitality is unbounded, yet it is their Lord in the person of the poor that monks and nuns love chiefly to entertain. They are more at home when washing the soiled feet of the footsore peasant, and teaching an unmannerly churl to cross himself and say grace, than in waiting upon kings or lords. Considering what royal retainers mostly are, it would have been better far if the degenerate Coldingham had never known such guests. We read, to be sure, that the blessed abbot of La Trappe, for all his sternness, received our own James II. once a year, when William of Nassau had driven him from his throne, and once we read

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that James's queen came with him. Yet that annual visit was for prayer and spiritual retreat, not a temporary halt in the midst of a royal progress. James had done with progresses; he went to feast his soul at the wonderful fountains of ardent eloquence which flowed at times from that silent man, De Rancé. Yet good was ordained to come out of the royal visit to Coldingham. During the night the queen fell sick; in a short time she was frantic with delirium, so outrageous as to disturb the whole monastery. How long the seizure lasted appears uncertain; at any rate, the next day St. Ebba told the king that the cause of the queen's madness, for such it had seemed, and of her present condition (for her limbs were all contracted, and she lay like one at the point of death), was her profane use of Wilfrid's reliquary and his unjust persecution of the holy bishop. Moreover, the abbess undertook to predict that if Wilfrid's property was restored to him, and he was reinstated in his bishopric, in obedience to the Pope's mandate, the queen would speedily recover. But, if this was too much to ask, St. Ebba suggested to the king the restoration of Wilfrid's property, his liberation from prison, and a permission to leave the country. To this latter proposal the king assented. He was wearied out with the wonders of his troublesome captive, and for all his seeming unbelief, the monarch was now beginning to be touched with awe. The result is too gratifying to be left untold: the queen recovered, and though from what occurred it would appear that her repentance was not immediate, yet God did accord that grace

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to her at last, and after Egfrid's death she retired into a monastery, bewailing her many sins, and especially her persecution of St. Wilfrid, and through the merits of Christ expiating in the works of penance her past iniquities.[1]

We said the repentance of Ermenburga was not immediate; yet, perhaps, the inhospitality Wilfrid met with among the Mercians and West Saxons was the result of Egfrid's machinations rather than Ermenburga's persevering hatred. For the Northumbrian king, like Pharaoh, seems to have repented that he had let Wilfrid go, either out of momentary fear, or through a desire to oblige his aunt. During all this time we hear nothing of the intruding bishops, how they resisted the Pope's mandate, probably through disbelief of its being lawfully gained, how they governed their dioceses, or what steps St. Theodore took to repair the mischief he had done. One of Wilfrid's enemies had gone to her rest, the sainted abbess of Whitby; she died in 680, possibly in November,[2] one year after the decease of St. Etheldreda. However, it is clear that Wilfrid saw no good was to be done by refusing the king's permission to retire, no principle was compromised by submitting to this fresh exile. Gathering, therefore, his companions together, and being put in possession of his reliquary and other property, the bishop of York—for such he still was in the eye of the Church of Rome—once

[1] Of course the Northumbrian queen must not be confounded with St. Mildred's mother.

[2] Though of course her feast may have been fixed on the day of some translation of her relics.

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more left his diocese and entered the kingdom of Mercia.

The eighth general persecution, in the reign of Valerian, surpassed for cruelty even the fury of the Decian persecution in this notable particular, that the privilege of saying mass in prison was denied to the confessors who were priests; indeed, it appears from St. Cyprian's epistles, that in the reign of Valerian the holy martyr was unable even to get the Eucharist celebrated by other priests in the presence of the lay confessors. This was truly a refinement in cruelty; yet they who hunger and thirst after righteousness have the promise that they shall be filled. It would appear from the narrative, that Wilfrid, in his darkness, had not the privilege of celebrating mass. This, then, would be one chief delight and privilege of his liberty, of higher value than to look upon the sweet face of day, or breathe the liberal air which God has filled with thrilling health. Yet persecution was not yet over. He entered the kingdom of Mercia, the dominions of his friend Ethelred,[1] for whom he had procured the papal confirmation of the Peterborough charter. It is written that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in princes. Wilfrid had

[1] It is stated by some that Ethelred received Wilfrid, that at his *command* St. Theodore summoned a synod at Bishop's Hatfield to hear the papal bull read, &c. This is said on the authority of the Saxon Chronicle, which was not written before the middle of the eleventh century, and is no authority. Moreover, the Chronicon makes Wilfrid subscribe as *archbishop* of York, which he never was; whereas the Monasticon makes him subscribe "I, Wilfrid, by apostolic favour regaining the see of York," &c. In the text, therefore, no notice is taken of this apocryphal relation.

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been abundantly instructed in this lesson; yet all his experience would hardly have prepared him for the base ingratitude of Ethelred. That wisdom is much to be envied which is ever running into error, because the heart is slow to be credulous of evil; and such was Wilfrid's wisdom. He bent his steps to Mercia first of all, not doubting, surely, of an honourable welcome and a home in exile there; but he was miserably undeceived. To make up for Prince Elfwin's death King Ethelred had married Osdritha,[1] Egfrid's sister, and so peace had been concluded. When Ethelred, therefore, heard how Egfrid had been reluctantly obliged to let Wilfrid go, and how one of his own nobles, named Beorthwald, had received the exiled bishop with fitting hospitality, he was willing to do Egfrid a pleasure, and, like an unkingly churl as he was (though he changed into a Saint), when Wilfrid trusted he had found a home, and was building for himself and his companions a little Zoar, a humble monastery (*monasteriolum*), he banished the Saint from his dominions.

From Mercia Wilfrid passed into the kingdom of the West Saxons: but neither did he find a resting-place there; for Kentwin's wife was Ermenburga's sister, and, either ignorant of her sister's repentance, or the repentance itself having not yet begun, she used her influence to drive the exile thence also. Weary, yet patient still, unbroken by fatigues, undaunted by persecution, Wilfrid advanced upon his painful pilgrimage, and entered the territory of

[1] William of Malmesbury calls her Ostigild.

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Ethelwalch, king of the South Saxons. His imprisonment in the north must have been of short duration; for he returned into Northumberland at Egfrid's death, which took place in 685, and he was five[1] years a missionary bishop among the South Saxons, so that he must have arrived at the court of Ethelwalch before the expiration of the year 680.

The kingdom of Sussex was founded by Ella in 477, and for some reason or other it took scarcely any part in the perpetual wars and revolutions which were changing the face of the rest of the island, and seems to have been very much behind the other kingdoms of the heptarchy in civilisation. Eddi describes the country as so full of woods and cliffs that nature was a kind of rampart to it, which not only warded off invasion, but by almost prohibiting commerce, kept the people in a rude and ignorant seclusion. King Ethelwalch, however, was a Christian, though he had not been so long; Wulfere, the king of Mercia, had persuaded him to embrace the Gospel and to receive the Sacrament of Baptism; and Ebba, the queen of Ethelwalch, was Christian also, being the daughter of Eanfrid, a prince probably of the Wiccii,[2] a tribe adjoining the West Saxons, and upon whose border the synod of Augustine's oak had been held. Moreover, among

[1] This is St. Bede's chronology: we suspect five years are too much to assign to St. Wilfrid's sojourn among the South Saxons, for 680 will scarcely hold the quantity of history compressed into it; or else he did not return to his diocese so soon as 685. However, we have not meddled with the usual received dates in the text *so far*.

[2] The Worcestershire men.

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the South Saxons, a Scottish monk named Dicul ruled a little monastery at Bosenham, which contained only five or six monks, eminent for their spirit of humility and love of holy poverty, yet whose preaching was despised by the people. Notwithstanding the presence of all these Christian materials, no effort seems to have been made, or at least with any success, for the conversion of the people till Wilfrid came. St. Theodore was probably busied with the internal government of the existing churches, in establishing canonical practices, and in pushing forward those extensive plans of improvement to which the Saxon Church was afterwards so deeply indebted. Ethelwalch received Wilfrid and his clerks gladly, and besought them to preach the Gospel. Here, therefore, ended for the present the bishop's weary wanderings. By the mercy of God a fresh and wide field was opened before him for the renewal of his missionary labours. As his first exile had been abundantly blessed to the poor Frisons, his second exile was no less so to the benighted men of Sussex. So that Wilfrid might now make the psalmist's words his own, "Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy, but hast set my feet in a large room."

Something, in all probability, had been silently effected by the Christian profession of their king and queen, and by the winning example of the Scottish monks, for when Wilfrid began to preach, the conversion was almost national at once, and it pleased God to confirm his preaching by a very wonderful miracle. For three whole years a destructive drought had prevailed through all Sussex,

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and a grievous famine came as its natural consequence. At last the poor sufferers were driven to desperation, and when no longer able to procure food they went down to the cliffs on the abrupt seashore by fifties at a time, and joining hand in hand leaped from the top, and were either dashed in pieces on the rocks below or at high tide swallowed by the sea. But on the very day of Wilfrid's preaching there fell a gentle and a copious rain, which gladdened the whole nation, and covered the face of the earth with fresh verdure. It was natural, and of course reasonable, to connect this blessing with the coming of the new faith; most gave up their idol worship; and the king felt himself sufficiently supported by public opinion to constrain the few who remained obstinate, and so to abolish idolatry throughout his dominions. In return for this great benefit of the Gospel, Ethelwalch conferred on Wilfrid the peninsula of Selsey, or Island of Seals, near Chichester, with land enough to support eighty-seven families.[1] There Wilfrid built a monastery, of which he took possession with Eddi the precentor, and his four priests, Eappa, Padda, Burghelm, and Eadda; it is very questionable whether this did not form the whole retinue of the exiled bishop of York. The episcopal throne was not removed from Selsey to Chichester till the year 1070, when Bishop Stigand moved it, yet no successor was appointed to Wil-

[1] Mr. Peck absurdly argues that from this we may gather the number of Wilfrid's retinue, viz. 870 people, and proceeds in consequence to compare him with Wolsey! Bede's narrative, a little further on, would have shown him that the band of exiles were not the only tenants of Selsey.

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frid in the see of Selsey till 711. There, for five years, says St. Bede, the bishop of York lived as bishop of Sussex, preaching, baptizing, and confirming; and doubtless, for all they were Scots, the handful of monks at Bosenham found a kind father in the missionary bishop; for in spite of his love of the canons, the love of poverty was far more in Wilfrid's eyes; and, perhaps, when the Easter of 682 came round, Dicul and his monks had been won over to the side of the Roman usages.

When time corrects the mistakes of men and sets their judgments right, it is a gradual work. Time was when the Saints were regarded by so-called philosophic writers as weak, useless people, who retarded improvement rather than accelerated it. Now, both Protestant and infidel, by dint of a less partial research, have discovered that the Saints were the great civilisers of their day, and the laborious lives of many a German and French misbeliever have been, and are being, dedicated to repairing the injustice their forefathers have done to the Church and Saints of the dark ages. Surely God will bless with further truth, and even with conversion, such an honourable and equitable toil as this, if a lowly heart keep down the risings of intellectual pride. To those who deeply reverence the memory of the Catholic Saints, who look on them with fear and love as intercessors with Christ on our behalf, and do homage to the wondrous virtue of their sacred relics, it is but a little matter to know that they were instruments in promoting earthly civilisation; yet was it a Divine work, and so to be dwelt on with admiring love. To get near to God by an

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ascetic life is incomparably more than to be the greatest discoverer in science or teacher of humanising arts; and this is the first thing a Catholic looks at in the examples of the Saints, yet does he not forget, or even inadequately estimate, the lower task which they have been commissioned to fulfil.

Wilfrid's heart was moved with pity for the famishing men of Sussex. True the rain was come, and the dismal withered downs had clothed themselves with bright sward, cheering both heart and eye. Yet the seasons must go round, and the fruitful year fulfil its complement of moons, before seed-time and harvest, and the teeming garner, and the busy threshing-floor would quite end the famine. The bishop saw that the sea and inland brooks were full of fish, and that the ignorant peasants for want of skill could make no use of this Divine bounty. The art of fishing went no further than the capture of a few eels. The bishop, therefore, borrowed all the eel-nets he could, and seems to have made a kind of drag-net of them. He then went down to the sea with his men, cast in his net, and brought to land three hundred fishes, to the joyous surprise of the poor natives, who perhaps thought the draught had somewhat of a miraculous character about it. But, if they admired the bishop's skill, they loved his kind heart more. Those three hundred fish, thought the men of Sussex, will go to the bishop's monastery; but no, St. Wilfrid's distribution of them was as eloquent as a sermon to the Sussex converts. He divided the fish into three heaps of one hundred each; the first he gave to the

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poor, the second to the owners of the borrowed nets, the third he reserved for the monastery. Wilfrid had many ways of preaching the Gospel. Was not this a beautiful preaching on that Sussex shore, where so lately the famished poor had dashed themselves from the cliffs in the intolerable pangs of hunger? But there was a preaching yet more beautiful upon the low-lying peninsula of Selsey. Not content with instructing and baptizing the free-born tenants on the monastery lands, he counted up the poor slaves who were now his absolute property. There were two hundred and fifty men and women, and these he immediately gifted with their liberty, as if it were a monstrous thing for him to hold a slave, who came to enfranchise souls from the servitude of Satan. When the news spread over Sussex that the bishop's slaves in Selsey were set free, was it a wonder that the people flocked to enter through the waters of Baptism into the glorious liberty of the Catholic Church? Such was Wilfrid's life in the diocese of Chichester: no doubt there was the holy water by night, and all the austerities by day which we read of when he was at Ripon; and then there were all the cares from without, the cares of a bishop's office, and that bishop a missionary. He knew not that in the thirteenth century there would be a poor persecuted bishop going up and down among the villages of Sussex, persecuted by Henry III. as he was by Egfrid, appealing to Rome, yet for two years ineffectually; Rome, in the thirteenth century, as well as in the seventh, still at her blessed work of rebuking rude, strong-handed kings; a Saint, too, in the see of

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Canterbury; but St. Edmund was the friend of St. Richard de Wyche, whereas St. Theodore was not yet reconciled to Wilfrid. St. Richard entered into Wilfrid's labours; but he, too, had a struggle to hold them fast. His help came from the same quarter as Wilfrid's, the holy hills of Rome.

Wilfrid's name is also connected with the first public observation of St. Oswald's day; for it was in 681, according to the usual dates, that the pestilence was stayed in the monastery of Selsey, at the intercession of St. Oswald.[1] The Yorkshire monks had brought their northern traditions and devotions with them. This pestilence must have greatly tried the faith and afflicted the heart of Wilfrid; for we read that it carried off some of his original companions as well as many brethren who had been converts from the South Saxons. But here, again, the common chronology seems very dubious. A monastery could hardly have been built and furnished with new brethren to the extent which St. Bede's language implies, within the year after Wilfrid's arrival in the kingdom. Perhaps the best plan for making the narrative straightforward is to assume Bede's five years to be the real duration of St. Wilfrid's sojourn among the South Saxons, and, in opposition to Mabillon, to fix his arrival in Sussex in the year 682, and his return to his diocese in the year 687, the second of Alfrid's reign. St. Bede (Hist. iv. 13), makes him return on Egfrid's death, whereas (v. 19) he distinctly states that he did not return till the second year of Alfrid's reign,

[1] See his Life in this Series, No. VI. 74, *et seqq.*

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and from this point we shall fix the dates according to this assumption. The year 686 we conjecture to have been spent partly in Sussex, and partly in the north.

Meanwhile St. Ebba died, and sundry changes of an ecclesiastical nature took place in Wilfrid's diocese. Indeed, it would seem altogether that it had not been wisely partitioned, or that the king would not let the Church alone. In 681 St. Theodore sent Trumwin into Scotland as bishop of the Picts, but after four years he was compelled to return, and retired into the monastery of Whitby. In 684[1] St. Theodore, at the request of King Egfrid, held a synod in Northumberland, at Twyford-on-the-Alne, in which the archbishop deposed Tumbert, the bishop of Hexham. Eata, who had left the see of Hexham for that of Lindisfarne, was now moved back to Hexham, and St. Cuthbert was compelled to receive consecration as bishop of Lindisfarne. How St. Theodore held this synod at Twyford in the face of the Pope's decrees, the truth of which he had now had abundant time to ascertain, is perfectly inexplicable. Eata was succeeded in the see of Hexham by St. John of Beverley. But, quitting this scene of confusing change, and leaving Wilfrid in his active peace at Selsey, master of all the hearts of all the Sussex men, let us turn to his persecutors Egfrid and Ermenburga.

How provoking is the scantiness of the old chronicles when one would fain set in a clear light the doings of the Saints, the actions of blessed

[1] Cressy says 685.

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spirits who now live and reign with Christ in heaven! Why should we be ashamed to confess that we write this life of Wilfrid under continual constraint, and harassed by a suspended judgment; for ever and anon the story touches on the life of Theodore, and his conduct looks ill-favoured, yet perhaps had some good interpretation if we knew enough to find it out? For this we do know, that he was one of the greatest men and holiest Saints which Christendom possessed in its whole width in the seventh age. Why then should we be ashamed of confessing that we dare not write freely about him for fear of offending God? One may even feel a legitimate distress in reading dramas and imaginary histories, wherein parts are boldly assigned to men who, though unseen, are yet alive and nigh to God, and so calling for our reverence, or reprobate and so laying on us the duty of a solemn silence, or we know not what they are, and so our office is to pray, and to make mention of them at the blessed Sacrifice of the Altar. But at this rate a man may say it is impossible to write the lives of the Saints; we can only compose their panegyrics, and so the force of their example will be lost. No; it is not quite thus: we do not say, the very thought is shocking, that the Saints were sinless; but that in cases where from antiquity or imperfect records, or any other cause, their actions are doubtful, that which in the case of the living we call the judgment of charity becomes in the case of the Saints, whom the Church bids us reverence by name, something incomparably more solemn. Sure we are—the Church has ruled it—that Wilfrid

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was unjustly used; and if ever he grew irritable, if ever out of a human self-love or a mere jealousy for his rights he unnecessarily thwarted St. Theodore's reforms, we doubt not he repented of it humbly. We have the archbishop's own confession that on *his* side there was temper, and angry zeal, and a respect of persons; and the holy primate humbled himself to his adversary and made reparation for the wrong, so far as lay in his power. How then shall we, even in writing, set them one against the other, when they reign together now? May they intercede for us their fallen children in the faith!

But let us follow the fortunes of Egfrid and Ermenburga. It was in no spirit of unmanly exultation that the ancients dwelt on the disastrous lives or untimely ends of the powerful men of this world, who in their wantonness persecuted the Catholic Church. They amassed such melancholy judgments and condensed them into one dark chronicle, by way of solemn consolation to themselves and awe-inspiring admonition to the world. They regarded such fearful interventions of Providence as forming a perpetual comment on our blessed Lord's promise to be with His Church: it was a pious act to collect them together; they formed a kind of theology in themselves. But while we proceed to tell how like a judgment was Egfrid's doom, shall we number him among the persecutors? It is hard to do so. William of Malmesbury knew not whether to say good or evil of King Egfrid; how much more then should we suspend our judgment! What could be more atro-

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cious than his persecution of St. Wilfrid, or more barbarous than the sufferings which he inflicted on him? And of a piece with this barbarity were his inhuman ravages in Ireland and among the Picts. Yet, on the other hand, he was the munificent patron of St. Benedict Biscop; he it was who endowed the noble monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, and who, out of reverence for St. Peter's chair, asked a confirmation of their charters from the Holy See: and further, he was the friend of St. Cuthbert, and in many things followed his counsels. It would have been well for him had he followed the last counsel the bishop of Lindisfarne ever gave him, when he besought him not to invade the Picts. In the year 684 Egfrid, provoked by some hostilities, the nature of which is not recorded, sent an army under Bertus to chastise the Irish: by the king's orders the commission was fulfilled with circumstances of appalling ferocity: neither age nor sex, neither churches nor monasteries were spared by the Northumbrian army: that miserable island, which still pleads against England with an indictment of almost numberless counts, was laid waste with fire and sword, until there rose up to Heaven from the whole land one general curse against the brutal king of Northumberland. The English themselves regarded that curse as answered and fulfilled in Egfrid's fate; neither were his own subjects slow to connect his persecution of Wilfrid with his subsequent misfortunes. The noise of that awful curse was borne across the breadth of England, and broke the conventual peace of Whitby. The

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blessed Elfleda had succeeded St. Hilda in the government of the monastery, and she was Egfrid's sister. Grievous it was to her gentle spirit that her brother should perpetrate such shocking cruelties and such daring sacrilege, and a cloud came over her, and she felt inwardly that there was too much cause to fear that that Irish curse would be an answered prayer. On Coquet Island she met St. Cuthbert, and asked him of the future, for she knew how abundantly God had given that holy man the gift of prophecy. From what the bishop said, Elfleda augured the worst, and so it proved. In 685 Egfrid determined to take vengeance on the Picts: with more than a wise foreboding St. Cuthbert warned him to abstain. But anger is always infatuated: besides, the Irish curse was at his doors, so Egfrid marched across the border to his doom.

When Egfrid gave, he gave truly with the bounty of a king. One of his gifts to St. Cuthbert was the "merry" city of Carlisle, with the region fifteen miles around it. But Carlisle was not merry then. For thither Ermenburga had retired to wait for news of Egfrid from beyond the Solway. That Irish curse—it haunted Ermenburga too: a melancholy presentiment took possession of her, and her spirit was overwhelmed with heaviness. St. Cuthbert went to Carlisle out of charity to comfort the queen; yet what could he say to her when he half knew what was to be the end of all? The day after his arrival the citizens were fain he should go out to see the city, for it was his own, how goodly it was and how marvellous its walls. The bishop followed where they led him, and by the

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brink of the Roman fountain it was revealed to him that at that moment Egfrid was defeated and slain. Carlisle might not be safe if the Picts, flushed with their success, should retaliate and invade Northumberland. It was Saturday; he bade the queen stay Sunday over and then withdraw. So Egfrid perished; but Ermenburga came to a better end; for when next we read of Cuthbert coming to his city of Carlisle, it was to give the veil to the penitent and widowed queen.

In 685, the year of Egfrid's death, Cedwalla of the West Saxon blood royal slew Wilfrid's patron, Ethelwalch, and took possession of the kingdom of Sussex. It would appear that he was at this time a pagan, but soon after became a convert to the faith; and was as staunch a friend to Wilfrid as ever Ethelwalch had been. In the year following Cedwalla invaded the Isle of Wight; he was then a catechumen, and he made a vow that if he was successful, he would consecrate a fourth part both of the land and booty to the service of God. In performance of this vow he made over the fourth to Wilfrid, as the minister of God. But Egfrid's death was likely to open Wilfrid a return to his own diocese; he therefore resigned his portion of the island to his nephew Bernwine, joining with him a priest named Hiddila to preach and to baptize. The Isle of Wight was the last outpost of paganism, the last to be won to Christ. St. Cedwalla stormed it with his secular power, and under Wilfrid's auspices it was soon brought to capitulate to the mild terms of the Gospel, and to bear the gentle yoke of Christ. It was fitting the

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great Yorkshire missionary should be chosen to end the conversion of England, by evangelising that beautiful island. To give the Gospel to the islanders was his last act in those parts. No bishop, for the present, succeeded him at Selsey; the Church of Sussex became, for a few years, part of the diocese of Winchester.

If it lift the spirits and cheer the heart to have wrought some mighty change in Church or State, a change not mighty only but ennobling, there is something which softens the heart more and soothes it better, and bears to be dwelt on longer, in the joy of having been a fountain of happiness springing up in secret places, and running over upon the endearing ties of private life. The Church has changed the surface of the world, but how much holier and more heavenly is its work when it has come whole and entire to each cottage of the poor man, as entire as though its rights and liberties were wholly his and only his! Cedwalla gave to Wilfrid the town of Paganham in Sussex, and Wilfrid had some touching freedoms granted to the people of his town—that no castle should be built there, no tax laid upon the people for the mending of the bridges, and no conscription for the army: "and I Cedwalla," so runs the charter, "for a further confirmation hereof, have put a turf of the said ground upon the holy Altar of our Saviour, and by reason of my ignorance in writing my name, I have expressed and subscribed the sign of the Holy Cross." For many a year how many a mouth blessed Wilfrid in the little town of Paganham! When the lights twinkled in the windows

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on a winter's night, to a passing traveller those straggling streets of Paganham might look like any other town; but it was not so: the Church had touched the town, and a very chrism of pure and simple-mannered happiness was outpoured upon it. No stern castle frowned with its deep machicolations from the summit of the hill, but the sheep browsed there, and the children played there, and there were the blue sky above, and the sweet unhindered breezes. No rude retainers, no debauched soldiers spread dismay and sin among the peaceable inhabitants; no unmannerly officers of the king raised cruel levies for the bridges which the swollen brooks had forced away in the last rains; and the young men followed the plough and washed the sheep, and married early, and so had married sons to give a home to their grey hairs, and all because youths were not pressed for the royal army. What deep, yet hardly conscious happiness—for happiness is not deep when it is conscious—was there by the firesides of Paganham; and had you seen the children playing on the hill, where the castle *would* have been and was not, and had asked their Christian names, how many, think you, would have answered—Wilfrid? Not a few.

The life of the great archbishop of Canterbury was now drawing to a close. He had been Primate for nineteen years; eighteen had been spent in holy strenuousness, in unwearied care of the Churches, in the painful and difficult restoration of all good things decayed. Fourscore and four years pressed upon him, and it was time he should set his house in order! Blessed Saint! a citizen of Tarsus in

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Cilicia, no mean city, he had been a Paul to us, and did great things for our nation, the love of Christ making even sweet to him the rough ways and indocile tempers of us distant islanders. But now he bethought him of the past; and what had happened between Wilfrid and himself did not seem to be all that it should have been; the approach of death threw a different light upon things. Most of all was he struck with that untiring, self-forgetting energy which, when Wilfrid might no more edify the Church as a ruler, constrained him to found new Churches as a missionary: such an outpouring of strong love to God and His Christ surely betokened God's Spirit in His servant. Perhaps to an Oriental—yet Orientals can be untiring too—such a display of Saxon earnestness was something astonishing. Theodore might have seen, or deemed he saw, asperity in Wilfrid, a temper apt to take fire at slights, a mind obstinate and unable to forego its own resolutions; yet nowhere had he seen dejection, ease, languor, sullenness. Stay it where you would, stop this vent or that, still Wilfrid's zeal burst forth, and flowed where it could, as readily, generously, and purely as though all vents were equally natural to it, and there had been none to meddle with its first chosen course. And the more the archbishop thought, the more he wondered; and the more he wondered, the more he loved. It was the year St. Cuthbert died, 687, in every way a memorable year; Wilfrid was in Sussex when he was surprised by a summons from the archbishop, desiring him to meet him with Bishop Erconwald in London. To these two prelates St. Theodore

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made a general confession,[1] acknowledging withal that the thing which caused in his mind the sharpest remorse, was his injustice against the holy bishop Wilfrid, in that he had partly by open endeavours procured, or by secret connivance permitted him to be despoiled of his bishopric against the ecclesiastical canons. "'And because,' said he, 'I am by a warning from Heaven, and my frequent infirmities, admonished that my death will not be delayed beyond next year,[2] I beseech you, O holy bishop Wilfrid, mildly to forgive me my fault, and moreover to take upon you the charge of my archbishopric; for I do not know any one of the English nation so capable of it, considering the eminence of your learning, and skill in the ecclesiastical laws of Rome. As for myself, I will, by God's grace, for the future be very diligent to wipe out all old offences by my care to perform all good offices; and among the rest, I will endeavour by my intercession, and all the authority I have, to reconcile to you all the princes who have hitherto been your persecutors.' St. Wilfrid answered the archbishop with all meekness, as became so holy a person; but to accept of the archbishopric without the order and decree of a national council he would by no means consent. St. Theodore, notwithstanding, used his utmost endeavours to obtain his compliance in this point, but in vain. Wilfrid's reply was, 'May God and St. Peter pardon you all your differences: I will always pray for you as your friend. Send letters to your

[1] Such seems to be the import of William of Malmesbury's language, iii. de Pont. Cressy's Tr.

[2] He did not die till September 19, 690.

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friends, that they may restore to me part of my possessions according to the decree of the Holy See. The choice of a successor in your see will be afterwards considered in a proper assembly.'"

Surely never was there a man less ambitious than Wilfrid. With what honourable triumph might he now have mounted the throne of Canterbury, as coadjutor to an old man of fourscore and four years! What a prospect of usefulness, what a magnificent field for carrying out the great work he had begun, of thoroughly Romanising the Saxon Church! Was it then the expectation of fresh fatigues that daunted him? Wilfrid was not a man to be scared by peril or by toil. Besides, he would have but to carry out and fulfil what Theodore had already in great measure executed. No! it was simply this; Wilfrid was a Saint, and, as such, he wanted the appetite for dignities. The thirst for usefulness never takes that shape among the Saints: it is the mark of an ordinary Christian; for to do good in high places is indeed to do good, but it is the lowest way, for it is not where Christ did it; the highest way of usefulness is in holy poverty and Christlike abasement, and is only spiritually discernible. It is good for a heart to desire high place that it may serve the Lord, but thereof in the end cometh not seldom a burdened conscience and a lukewarm spirit. To pray against having dignities is a sure way to have room given to be useful, room for such secret operation as resembles the hidden strength of daily Providence, room for such a life as shall through grace in its poor measure be a copy of the Three and Thirty Years.

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Besides which, Wilfrid loved his Yorkshiremen; he loved his monks of Ripon and of Hexham. There God had called him; thence the iniquity of men had driven him away. The Church suffered in him; in his eclipse Rome's honour was overshadowed too; it was better for the Church, it was a more notable victory of principle, that he should be reinstated in the north, than that he should sit in St. Augustine's chair. But even here how edifying is his humility! He only requests to be restored to part of his possessions; yet the Roman decree went beyond this; it authorised the expulsion of the intruding bishops: Wilfrid's suffragans were to have his approval first: but charity seeketh not her own. Again, St. Gregory had given metropolitan honours to York; they had been lost in the Scotch succession at Lindisfarne. Wilfrid knew of this,—nay more, the power of Canterbury unjustly used had galled him fearfully: yet even at Rome he never sought a fresh grant of this useful dignity. York had no archbishop for forty-six years more yet, when Egbert, Alcuin's master, retrieved the ancient honours of the see. Surely all this abstinence from dignities, this withholding of just claims, is a token of an unworldly spirit. Historians have expressed surprise at the personal abasement of the Saints, and their *arrogance* where the rights of the Church are concerned: craft and hypocrisy, every evil quality has been tortured to give up the meaning of the riddle, yet has it remained a riddle still. O the stupidity of earthly wisdom, how is she a poor blindfold thing walking the courts of the sanctuary and the alleys of the cloister in an ill-mannered and

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ungainly way, like a misbehaving intruder in a sphere above his vulgar birth!

St. Theodore, according to his promise, wrote letters to king Alfrid, and also the abbess Elfleda, who had unhappily inherited St. Hilda's dislike of Wilfrid. His letter to Ethelred, the Mercian king, who had treated our Saint with such royal ingratitude, has been preserved both by Eddi and William of Malmesbury, and runs thus:[1] "Your admirable sanctity, my beloved son, may hereby take notice that a perfect reconciliation is made between myself and the venerable Bishop Wilfrid. Therefore I do admonish you, and in the love of Christ require, that you would still continue, as you have hitherto done,[2] your protection of him, who these many years has been despoiled of his revenues, and forced to live among pagans, in the conversion of whom he has served our Lord with great effect. Therefore, I, Theodore, humble bishop, do now in my decrepit age, make this request unto you, desiring the same which the apostle's authority recommends, touching a holy bishop who has so long a time possessed his soul in patience, and in imitation of Christ our head with all humility and meekness expects an end of so many injuries done him. Moreover, if I have found favour in your eyes, let me enjoy the comfort of seeing your face most desirable to me, and let not a journey for that purpose seem burdensome to you, that my soul may bless you before I die. Beloved son, perform

[1] Cressy, xix. 10.

[2] St. Theodore was probably ignorant of Ethelred's ingratitude, for Wilfrid was not a man to publish his wrongs.

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the request I have made you in behalf of the said holy bishop, and be assured that if you obey your father who is shortly to depart out of this world, you will reap great profit to your soul by it. Farewell." St. Ethelred,—for he, too, was a Saint, great as king of Mercia, but greater far as monk of Bardney, in that a cowl is a holier thing than a crown, —St. Ethelred received Wilfrid with honour and hospitality,—nor can we doubt that the blessed king followed St. Theodore's example, and humbled himself to confess his former fault. He restored to Wilfrid all those Benedictine houses which he had founded in Mercia, with their lands and privileges intact, and then bid him God-speed as the bishop of York went to his ancient diocese, now doubly dear to the returning exile.

On the throne of Northumberland sat his old friend and first patron Alfrid. But Alfrid was a changed man. It was not so much that exile and adversity had altered him, though they are bad nurseries for a king, unless they make him into a Saint. Alfrid was now called the Wise: he had taken to book-learning during his exile, and his heart was none the better for the improvement of his head. It seldom is. Doubtless, too, in the famous schools of Ireland, the headquarters of Celtic literature, he had lost some of his former reverence for Rome; and that is always a moral loss, as well as an error in opinion. There is a kind and degree of knowledge not uncommon among the great ones of the earth, which, when carried to the utmost, has no tendency to enlarge the heart or elevate the temper of a man; it is

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what is usually called statesmanship: at best a far-seeing, discreet craft, but essentially heartless and illiberal, and, as being heartless, continually deluding and over-reaching itself. So far as the Church is concerned, this poor statesmanship operates in checking great reforms, and quenching ardent outbreaks of zeal, and in filling prelatures with barely respectable mediocrity, lest high principle and a keen intellect should be troublesome and interfering. It has a mortal dread of Dunstans, and of Anselms, and of Beckets; and well it may, for they are ever too much for it. This same prudent statecraft has been some centuries hard at work to strangle the spirit St. Ignatius Loyola left on earth; but it only grows more vital every day, because truth is on its side, and noble-mindedness, and heavenly principle, and marvellous sanctity. Probably, therefore, Alfrid, in the shallow depths of his Celtic statecraft, saw that Wilfrid was not the kind of prelate that would suit his new views, nor the kind of man to let a crowned intellectualist experimentalise upon the Church. However, from whatever cause, Alfrid was an altered man, and from the first the alteration might have been detected even under the surface of a kindly welcome: for he did not give Wilfrid his see back at once; there was a hesitation for which no cause is assigned. He put him in immediate possession of his abbey at Hexham; and then, after an interval, restored the monastery of Ripon and the see of York. St. Bosa and St. John of Beverley retired in peacefulness, and out of obedience to St. Theodore's letter and the Roman decree. St.

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Cuthbert's secession and speedy death left the see of Lindisfarne also to Wilfrid's administration, until Eadbert was consecrated to it; Wilfrid voluntarily relinquishing it in order to carry out, in a canonical way, the project of St. Theodore to multiply bishoprics.

Once more, then, is Wilfrid on the throne of York, once more in the valley of the Tyne, and by the dark silent waters of the Nidd, once more visiting, preaching, confirming. There was many a monk both at Hexham and at Ripon who had prayed for the return of their father in the Lord. Wilfrid had trained them; they had been brought up in his system; they had come to think,—and not altogether wrongly,—that the welfare of the Northumbrian Church was bound up with the welfare of the holy bishop; not altogether wrongly—for, though it be true that in Wilfrid's absence there was all the outward, active show of a Church; though Saints, canonised Saints, filled the sees; though the archbishop of Canterbury actually held synods north of the Tyne; though there was constant doing and undoing, partitioning and repartitioning, change upon change; yet, for all that, we cannot find that the Church in the north was making way. St. Cuthbert's prayers were rising up from that wave-beaten spot of green, treeless turf, which hung on the coast of Northumberland; doubtless his merits were amassing treasures for the northern Church in years to come. Blessed ascetic that he was! who shall count the debt the men of Durham owe to him? Forgotten, as many Catholic things are, the poor of that seven-hilled

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city in the north have yet an affectionate remembrance of the wonder-working Cuthbert, and his strange wandering relics. Still the Church does not seem just then to have made any real advances; the monastic system does not seem to have spread or gained strength or fresh spirituality; and, after all, the flourishing state of monkery is the safest test of real Church reform. Was it that the blessing was suspended, and that even the saintly intruders into St. Wilfrid's see worked at a disadvantage, as working against Rome, and without the Apostolic benediction? The later history of this insular Church would seem to show that the absence of that benediction is almost a blight; it stunts all growths, though it may not cause absolute sterility; it is thus that Catholic churches decay and are transformed into pusillanimous communities. If it were that the loss of Rome's blessing was really keeping back the northern Church, then we may understand how it was that the Church *did* make way in one place, and in one place only—at the abbeys of Wearmouth and of Jarrow; for there was the presence of St. Benedict Biscop, who so honoured Rome, and with such tender devotion loved that sacred place, that, in spite of all the perils both by land and sea, five weary pilgrimages hardly satisfied his ardent feelings towards the Holy City. Where he was, therefore, the Church might well flourish; and he died while Wilfrid still ruled the Church of York. Strange to say, there is no record that these two Saints, doing the very same work, and filled with the very same spirit, ever met again after their cold parting in the streets

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of Lyons years ago, when Eddi, who could find nothing to blame about either, alluded, in his simple way, to Paul and Barnabas. The history of the five years of Wilfrid's peaceful rule are known in heaven, but they are not chronicled on earth. So it mostly is; our business is to give the reader a tiresome string of facts, of jarrings, feuds and fightings, a very lifeless narrative; yet the inner life, the life which makes the Saint an object of reverence and love—this we are obliged to divine in our own rude way, and how unsatisfactory it is! How little do we approach towards getting or giving an idea of what a Saint is, a just man canonised by the devotion of Catholic generations! Yet such a mass of facts and dates is not altogether secular; there is edification in it; that tarnished, commonplace outside of things—is it not the very selfsame tyranny under which we live ourselves to-day and to-morrow, and our sons shall live in morrows yet to come? And Wilfrid, and a host of men such as he, sanctified themselves by such means as are open to ourselves; and is there not edification in the vivid picturing of this plain fact unto ourselves—edification haply as great as if we had to tell of inward struggles, heights of contemplation won, traits of ascetic humility and love, such as Cassian had to tell, or such as the monks of La Trappe fed upon in those old lives which make the columns of Rosweide such a sweet treasure and endless recreation to a Catholic mind?

It was the year 691. Alfrid the Wise had now made trial of his old friend Wilfrid; it was clear he was not the sort of man for him. Wisdom like

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Alfrid's is always beginning; statesmanship has nothing to do with growths; inquiries, commissions, projects, changes, reversals, reorganisations, and all manner of half-work—statesmanship is competent to nothing more; and this was Alfrid's line. He could not wait to see how things answered; he created a public opinion, and then he had to feed it, and it is a hungry monster. Change of ministry, sessions, and acts of Parliament —he had not carrion of this sort ready at his hand; but there was much which he could do. There was a system of things for him to attack, and Wilfrid to be got rid of; indeed, that was only one work under two names, for Wilfrid was the soul of the system. Alfrid looked around him in the plenitude of his little wisdom, and he said, as gravely as might be, Of what good is the monastery of Ripon? Why, to Alfrid of absolutely none; but it might be to others. But when a king asks a question, his tone of voice answers it affirmatively or negatively. Ripon was of no good; the Witan shook their heads, and Ripon's fate was sealed. Something more energetic than prayer, fast, and vigil must be had, and the revenues of those Benedictine drones, who did nothing but act the romance of living Christlike lives, must be applied—it is a pity Alfrid had not some mechanical improvement at hand—to a bishopric. True, there was the same awkward heavenliness about a bishopric; yet there was something *visible*, and that is an immense comfort to the world which has not faith. Then, if they had a bishopric, they must not have such impracticable men as Wilfrid. Settled, therefore,

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it is, that Ripon shall be secularised, shall have a bishop, and that that bishop shall be Eadhed. But Wilfrid objected to Alfrid's church views; if a bishop were wanted there ever so much, it would be an evil precedent to suffer a king to create sees, spoil churches, and make experiments upon monasteries. But Alfrid had not quite the same power as the notorious Tudor, the great empiric in that way; Wilfrid would not give way, and he had law, equity, and Rome so completely on his side, that Alfrid was obliged to cast about for some more available handle against the bishop. His statesmanship stood him in good stead, for he hit upon an expedient which served his turn exactly. Wilfrid obeyed and carried out the rules St. Theodore had passed for the government of the Northumbrian Church prior to Wilfrid's expulsion, and those also enacted subsequently, when Theodore and Wilfrid had been reconciled. But such decrees as were made in the intervening time Wilfrid took no notice of; St. Theodore's own confession, no less than the decree of Rome, had absolutely annulled them. But Theodore was dead, so no speedy appeal to him would clear Wilfrid; and it was not hard for the royal statesman so to colour things as to make it appear that Wilfrid had contumaciously refused to acknowledge the metropolitan jurisdiction of Canterbury. Without wearying the reader with the details of all the trickery, it is enough to say, that the matter ended in Wilfrid's exile once again. His heart was as strong as ever, though his years were multiplied; he would have nothing to do with kingly interference in matters spiritual, so the lord abbot

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of Ripon took up his crosier with his old, unfailing cheerfulness, and marched out of Alfrid's kingdom.

Wilfrid had but one want on earth, and that was hard work. It mattered not where he was nor in what guise, provided only he was working for Christ. As an honoured bishop in his own vast diocese, as the lord abbot of an extensive filiation of monasteries from the Tyne to the Nen, from the Ure to the Welland, as missionary among the rude Frisons, as a fisherman by the seaside, and among the souls of Sussex, in chapter and in synod, in the pulpit and confessional, rebuking kings in palaces, and confirming children in villages,—it mattered not how or where, still, be it Christ's work, and Wilfrid's heart was in it, labouring with such a right good-will, and such an energy of contentment, as is refreshing to behold, for all it is so humbling to us beholders. Wilfrid now found work in Mercia. St. Theodore's letter had quite disabused St. Ethelred's mind; he received the exiled bishop with open arms, and would have established him in one of the Mercian sees if he could. Putta had just died, but Tistellus had this same year been consecrated in his room, so that the see of Hereford was full; and for a year Wilfrid was obliged to live in ascetic seclusion, or in training and leading forward King Ethelred to those heights of Christian perfection which he afterwards attained. But his retirement was of no long duration. The next year, 692, Seculph, the bishop of Lichfield, died, and Wilfrid was appointed to the vacant see. Once St. Chad had entered into his labours; now he, by a strange revolution, was the successor of St. Chad. Others

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say, with less show of authority, that Leicester was the new diocese of Wilfrid, divided from Lichfield at Seculph's death. Leicester certainly does appear to have once been the seat of a bishop, and it is much to be desired that it were so now; but we incline to think St. Wilfrid's new see was Lichfield, and not Leicester.[1] In this same year we find Wilfrid ordaining the blessed Ostfor as coadjutor to Bosil, bishop of Worcester, who was broken with age and many infirmities. Wilfrid's excuse for thus consecrating bishops was the vacancy of the see of Canterbury, St. Theodore being dead, and St. Bertwald not yet appointed. So, for twelve whole years, honoured and beloved, Wilfrid dwelt among the Mercians, and for eleven years held peaceable possession of the see of Lichfield. Need we conjecture how his time was spent? Secret austerities dictated by the spirit of penance which shone forth so eminently in the humble-minded bishop, and outward indefatigable labours for the diocese and Mercian monasteries,—these were the two sides of Wilfrid's life. His will grew to be more and more conformed to the Will of God; his faith, his hope, his love gained new accessions daily through the works of penitence and charity; doubtless, too, raptures in prayer and ecstacies at mass, and gifts of strange foreknowledge and celestial visions might be added: we know not: he lived the life of a Saint, therefore he was growing in sanctity day by day.

In 697 or 698 Wilfrid performed an episcopal act, which to him would be of a most touching nature,

[1] However, see Carte and Wharton, ap. Peck, History of Stamford, ii. 36.

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for it brought him once more into contact with his poor wild Frisons. Swibert had been one of his own subjects, a monk somewhere on the Scottish border. He was destined to be the Apostle of Westphalia. In 690 he had sailed into Friesland, one of the mystic twelve, of whom St. Willebrord was the head. They landed at the mouth of the Rhine, the old scene of Wilfrid's labours; and soon after Pope Sergius had consecrated Willebrord archbishop of Utrecht, Swibert was sent into England to be ordained a regionary bishop, that is, without any fixed see. The chair of Canterbury was vacant: besides which, to whom would he go more naturally than to his old diocesan, whose name yet lingered among the rough people of the Rhenish swamps? He received, therefore, his consecration from Wilfrid; and well may we imagine the interesting conversations which would pass between the old and young bishop about the converted Frisons; well may we suppose that Swibert would seek for counsel from the lips of such a tried and able missionary as Wilfrid, one, too, who knew the temper and the ways of the kind-hearted savages of Friesland.

But from this happy scene of tranquil labour, our attention is now called to a sad scene of fraud and violence, a masterpiece of Alfrid's statesmanship: for worldly wisdom cannot long succeed unless it allies itself with wickedness; no difficult matter when there is such natural affinity between them. The new primate was St. Bertwald: he had been a monk at Glastonbury, and afterwards at Reculver, a holy contemplative, who edified the Saxon Church from his high place for seven-and-thirty years of

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austerest living. He was a scholar, too, but does not seem to have possessed either the erudition of St. Theodore, or his talent for governing. The first years of his primacy were in great measure occupied by the Church and kingdom of Kent, which had fallen into a lamentable state of tumult and misrule in the years which preceded the reign of Withred. Even after the synod of Becancelde, much was to be done in carrying out his decrees, and years elapsed before the archbishop could actively interfere in the ecclesiastical affairs of the north. The time and leisure came at last: it were better the holy man had been detained in Kent.

By some means or other, and probably in great measure by false representations (for a lie saves statesmanship much troublesome ingenuity), Alfrid gained St. Bertwald to his side, and inspired him with a jealousy and dislike of Wilfrid. The good bishop of York had been busy consoling Ethelred for the loss of his queen, King Egfrid's sister, who had been inhumanly murdered by the people of Lincoln and Nottingham: he had been witness, too, to a wondrous scene in the great abbey of Ely, the disinterring of St. Etheldreda by St. Sexburga, her sister and successor; and it is chiefly on his testimony that the Church has received the pious belief of the incorruption of the blessed virgin's flesh. How wonderful a scene was that! Go where we will, while Wilfrid is alive, and in almost all things which concern the Church, the bishop of York has a work to do: his biography is, if we except the internal regimen of the see of Canterbury, the history of the Saxon Church in his day. Meanwhile, Alfrid

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could not let him alone; for a characteristic of statesmanship, the only feature about it which is not simply utilitarian, is an intense, painstaking hatred of high principle. St. Bertwald, it appears, was anxious to execute the Pope's decrees; but Alfrid managed to procrastinate, and ultimately to prejudice the archbishop against Wilfrid. "As for Wilfrid," says the author of the Series Wilfridiana,[1] "after he had now a long time exercised his office of a bishop up and down Mercia, in 703, at the desire of King Alfrid, Bertwald the archbishop called a general council of the bishops of all Britain to meet at Nestrefield, five miles north of Ripon, at which council Wilfrid was ordered to appear, and assurance given him that if he could prove he was really injured, he should have all imaginable reparation made for the wrong that he complained was done him. Well: he came, but met with none of the justice they promised him. For some bishops, indulging the king's humour, began presently to exasperate Wilfrid with false calumnies, and to provoke him with all the contradictions they were able. And when they could not prove what they objected with any show of reason, they at last added to their objections that he would not submit a tittle to the decrees of Archbishop Theodore. To whom answering, 'I did submit,' said he, 'to those decrees of Theodore which he promulged in peace, and with a canonical authority, and will in every particular obey them. Nevertheless, tell me how it is that for two-and-twenty years ye can be disobedient to the letters sent from the Apostolic See,

[1] Ap. Peck, ii. 38.

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and so vehemently accuse me because I do not receive those institutions of Theodore which he did not compose by a canonical authority, but, as you yourselves very well know, by the dictates of discord.' Wilfrid then did not reckon they did him such an injury by dividing his bishopric into more sees as that those prelates, to wit, Bosa and John, should exercise the episcopal function, who, according to Theodore's decree indeed, but against Wilfrid's consent (he being then unjustly banished), were promoted to that high honour. For the Roman bishop's decree was that that diocese being so large and wide should be parted into more sees; but that nevertheless was not to be done by mere archiepiscopal authority but a council solemnly assembled, they being first deposed who in Wilfrid's absence were contrary to the canons ordained bishops. This council therefore opposed itself to the Apostolic See, not for that it would part the diocese of York, but would itself confirm it to those bishops who held it by a violent and unjust intrusion. Meantime a great many high words without any reason in them being retorted among them with a noise confused enough, a young man belonging to the court and well known to Wilfrid thrust himself into the crowd, and coming up to him acquainted him with the meaning of the council's being in such a tumult. 'They design nothing,' said he, 'but to cozen you, by getting you first of all to set your own hand to stand to their judgments whatever they decree; so that when you are once tied down by the band of confinement, you may never be able to alter anything afterwards;

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forasmuch as the result of their decree will be this: That you forfeit all that you at any time held in lands, bishoprics, monasteries, or any other quality in the kingdom of the Northumbrians; and if you have procured anything in Mercia under King Ethelred, that you be forced to relinquish all that by surrendering the whole to the archbishop, to be collated by him on whom he pleases: and lastly, that by your own subscription you be degraded from the honour of a bishop.'

"Understanding all this, when the bishops urged him to subscribe, Wilfrid stoutly and constantly refused to do so. But whom they could not trick by cunning, they presently attempted to oppress by force. Wherefore they passed sentence that he should be divested of all that he had, and not hold so much as the smallest portion of any one little house or monastery either in the kingdom of the Northumbrians or of the Mercians. Nevertheless, when this resolution was divulged, his very enemies were seized with horror at the same, saying that it was an impious thing that a person every way honourable should without any certain crime being fixed on him be stripped of all that he had. Whereupon the king and the archbishop, being desired by some about them, granted him the monastery which he had erected at Ripon, but on this condition, that he should there quietly sit down, and without the king's license never go out of the bounds of that house, or any longer administer the office of a bishop, but that of himself he should renounce his rank of honour, and confirm it with the testimony of his own subscription. But the synod now de-

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manding of him to give up his right, he acted like a most resolute prelate; for he would not with one word spoil the labours of many years, and condemn the doctrine and rites which by his teaching the province had received." But let the saint speak for himself, for his speech is given us by Eddi, and a noble one it is, and the precentor says that the old man of seventy delivered it with an intrepid voice: "Wherefore would ye compel me to turn against myself this sword of direful calamity, the subscription of my own condemnation? Unworthy though I am, I have now borne the name of bishop these forty years, and shall I without any guilt make myself a suspected person now? Since the first fathers whom holy Gregory sent, was not I the first to root out the evil plants of Scottish planting, and bring the Northumbrians back to the Easter and the tonsure of the Holy See? Was I not the first to teach you how to sing like those of old, with double choirs, responsories, and antiphons; and the very first to bring into these parts the monastic rule of the holy father Benedict? And now must I condemn myself, conscious as I am of no iniquity? I appeal with all confidence to the Apostolic See: let the man who wishes to depose me accompany me thither to that judgment. Let the learned men of Rome know for what fault I am to be degraded before I consent thereto."[1]

Time was when an appeal to Rome had elicited nothing but jeers from the Northumbrian court. But Rome's power, the length and strength of her arm, were better known now: crowned cowards

[1] Eddi in Mabill. Act. Ben.

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quailed before the eye of the old man in his white cassock on the Vatican. It was hatred now, baffled spite, outwitted statesmanship, which broke forth with all its puerile fury, when the name of Rome was pronounced aloud by that old and outworn bishop. Surely the baseness and the turpitude of this wicked council need no comment; yet it is useful to observe that the Erastian bishops outheroded Herod, they made their decree stronger than Alfrid wanted it, and so baffled him: thus it always is, the more a man foregoes his nature or betrays his office, the viler he becomes; a wicked bishop becomes a very Satan: the lay nobles cry out against the blind passion of the decree. Alfrid surely might be disappointed: that council was to have been a masterpiece, but lo! it was a failure: and as to Bertwald, with what heart he went to vespers that evening we cannot tell. Deeply had Alfrid humbled him; statesmanship had been too much for the pious contemplative. He would have been happier that night had he been a simple monk in his old cell at Reculver.

One thing, however, Bertwald did. Alfrid was for using violence, the only refuge of disconcerted statesmanship; but the name of Rome had been pronounced, and the archbishop was resolute that Wilfrid should go forth free. But the zeal of adulation has no bounds; it becomes grotesque. The Erastian bishops probably perceived how Alfrid the Wise was vexed because truth, simplicity, and firmness had been too much for him; and they promulged a decree excommunicating Wilfrid and his adherents. Nay, to such a disgraceful excess did their spite proceed, that if any of Wilfrid's abbots

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or monks sat at table and blessed the food set before him by signing the cross over it, they threw what he left to the dogs, and washed the vessels out of which he ate with the same ceremony as if they were polluted things! Meanwhile, Wilfrid retired into Mercia, and related to St. Ethelred the proceedings of this tumultuous synod: the king was true to Wilfrid; he expressed the greatest indignation and disgust at what had happened, and, so far as he was concerned, pledged himself to keep Wilfrid's abbeys for him till his return.

What wonderful faith St. Wilfrid had in Rome! What indomitable energy in himself! The old Saxon bishop with threescore and ten years upon his back, and well-nigh twenty of laborious exile—he started for Rome with all the freshness of his impatient youth when first liberated from the Kentish court. His light burned clear to the last; his had been a life of pure-thoughted abstinence, and therefore he had no old age. What a help cheerfulness is in religion, a real, genuine, unaffected mirth of heart, dwelling in its own sunshine, pure, humble, loving, and outpouring itself in all manner of courtesy and considerateness upon all who come within its reach. There is no magnanimity where there is not cheerfulness. Melancholy may be meditative and touching, but it cannot be magnanimous. There is something quite heroic about Wilfrid's cheerfulness; it was the staff he walked with all his life long, up hill and down, for his had been an uneven road; it was the staff the old pilgrim leaned upon as he went forth all that long way to Rome. Why was it that no one

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ever heard a word from Wilfrid's lips of querulous complaint, of accusation of his enemies? Why was it that in England, abroad, even before the Roman synods, the bishop was silent about his slanderers, and kept meekly to a bare defence of himself? Why was it, but that he was a cheerful man, and hated sin with such a thorough hatred that he would not keep it in his mind to brood upon, even when it had so nearly concerned himself? A man can do no work who is not cheerful; and cheerfulness only flows from one fountain, an ascetic life. Shamefaced confession, daily examination of conscience, the interruption of canonical hours, fasting, watching, endurance of cold, voluntary discomforts, are all harsh-sounding words, and to worldly ears dead, unhelpful formalities; yet of these comes cheerfulness. Elastic spirits spring from an examined conscience; a disencumbered mind to think of and act for our neighbours is soon the growth of sacramental confession, which alone is our safeguard against morbid self-inspection. Love of God is the child of fasting, and to watch and to be cold gives a man such an onlooking disposition, that he bursts easily from the fretting trammels and effeminate retardments of his "old self," which he durst not leave behind were he not conscious that he was doing works of penance which sufficiently provide for the memory of the past, for all such works cry *Amplius lava me* at all hours of the day. Thus, while on the modern system religion becomes a weak, delicate, sickly, timorous, unnerving psychology, by the help of Catholic austerities it is a keen, vigorous, masculine, self-forgetting, loving, hard-

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working, bright-faced, and light-hearted thing, delightful to contemplate, as if it were in its measure a visible disclosure of the mercy and the justice of Him whose grace it is. But where is Christ in all this? a man may say. Everywhere; if men would know what it is to love Christ, they must read the lives of the austere Saints; they threw themselves out of themselves into Him, and none but ascetics can do so. The love of God is the keeping of His commandments; where then is that love when those commandments are decried as bondage? The work of a Christian is the bearing of a Cross; how is that work done when the Cross is laid aside? Scanty churches, few priests, children uneducated, poor unrelieved, colonies unevangelised, the bridegroom gone, and yet no fasting! St. Wilfrid might have asked, where is Christ in all this? When the world is crucified to us, and we unto the world, we shall learn that the love of Christ is other than we deemed it. The world a Cross, we, each one separately, nailed thereon, or with manful hands in the act of nailing ourselves thereto, so that the world and we together make up the figure of a living Crucifix—is this the fashion of our lives? If not, let us fear God, and make haste along our way, asking of the Saints, whose lives were of such guise as that, how we may at length, not fear only, but likewise learn to love, and in the end win such a hope that we may have boldness even amid the affrighting pomp of Doomsday.

With a right merry heart and joyous trust, Wilfrid went forth to Rome; it was about Christmas when he got there, his third visit and his last. A Greek

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then sat upon St. Peter's chair, John VI. "Thither, also," we are again quoting the author of the Series Wilfridiana, "were reached messengers from Bertwald, the archbishop, with his letters of accusation, humbly requesting audience to be given them from that most glorious See, concerning the message whereon they were employed. But when Pope John VI., with his bishops assembled from all parts, were come to the place where synods were then wont to be held, Wilfrid first presented a schedule of his petition to the synod, praying that the pontiff would vouchsafe to request Ethelred, king of the Mercians (by the same instance of authority wherewith his predecessors Agatho, Benedict, and Sergius required it before) that no man might presume, through envy or wicked covetousness, to invade or take from him those monasteries with their appurtenances which were given him by King Ethelred himself, his brother Wulfere, or any other persons whatsoever, for the redemption of their souls. Likewise that he would entreat King Alfrid to fulfil all those things which his own predecessor Agatho had decreed. But if this should perchance seem hard to the king [how little deserving the Saint's considerate humility !], that the bishopric of the city of York, with the monasteries which he held and were very many, might be bestowed at the Pope's pleasure on whom he should think would best govern them; and that only two monasteries, Ripon and Hexham, with all their lands and possessions, be restored to him. Pope John, when he heard these things, thought it necessary to examine what his predecessors had decreed in this affair. What helped

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to acquit Wilfrid at this time, as Bede himself tells us, was a reading of the acts of the Synod[1] of Pope Agatho, held when Wilfrid was the second time at Rome, and sitting in council among the bishops there. For when (as the cause[2] required) the acts of that synod were on some certain days read before the nobles and a multitude of others at the Pope's command, they came at last to the place where it was written, 'Wilfrid, beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic See about his own business, and by authority of the same concerning matters certain and uncertain absolved, and set in the seat of judgment, with one hundred and twenty-five other bishops assembled in synod, professed, and with his subscription confirmed the true and Catholic faith, for all the north part or islands of Britain and Ireland, which are inhabited by the nations of the English and Britons, together with the Picts and Scots.' When it was read, a great surprise seized the audience, and the reader stopping short, they began to inquire of one another, who that Bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, a counsellor of the Pope's, and many others who had seen him there in Pope Agatho's time, said that he was the bishop who, being lately accused by his countrymen, was again come thither to be judged by the Apostolic See; who being accused before, said they, and repairing hither (the cause and controversy of both parties being presently after heard and adjudged), was pronounced by Pope Agatho to have been driven

[1] Against the Monothelites.
[2] Not Wilfrid's cause, but some other business.

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from his bishopric contrary to right, and had in so great esteem by him, that he would needs command him to take his place in a council of bishops which he assembled, as a person of an uncorrupt faith and an upright life. Which being heard, they all, together with the pontiff himself, said, A man of so great authority, who had been a bishop near forty years, ought by no means to be condemned, but being absolved entirely from the crimes whereof he was accused, should be returned with honour. Afterwards, one day, the synod being assembled, they commanded Wilfrid's party and his accusers, who came from the archbishop, to appear. Whereupon his accusers first said, that Bishop Wilfrid, contumaciously opposing the canons of Bertwald, archbishop of Canterbury, and all Britain (although these canons were decreed before a synod), refused to submit to the same. To the substance of which accusation Wilfrid thus replied: 'I humbly and earnestly beseech your most excellent Holiness, that, condescending to so mean a person as I am, you will be pleased to hear the truth of this matter from me. For I was sitting in council[1] with my own abbots, priests, and deacons, when they sent to me one of the bishops there assembled [*i.e.* with St. Bertwald] to ask me in the king's name, as also in the archbishop's, if I would submit to the sole determination of the archbishop himself, and was ready to comply with every particular he had de-

[1] Wilfrid seems here to be relating some stage of the proceedings prior to the iniquitous council at Nestrefield: his silence about that council is only another instance of his humility, self-restraint, and love of his persecutors.

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creed in his own private judgment or not? To this I answered the bishop who asked me, It were fitting we should first know what the sentence of his judgment is, before we can declare whether we are ready or no to submit to it. He then affirmed he did not know what it was himself; nor would the archbishop, he said, by revealing it to any of us after any other manner, be willing to make known the full of his resolution, without we first, in open council, with our own hands would freely subscribe, that resolving to obey his sole judgment in all things, and no ways declining it, we will not depart a jot therefrom. I said, I never before now heard that a subscription so strict and full of confinement as this, was insisted upon by any man whatever; that, being bound as strongly as by an oath, he should promise to perform the decrees made, though requiring impossibilities; and all this before he might know what they contained. Nevertheless, I replied there, before the assembly, that in all things wherein the archbishop's judgment appeared agreeable to the decrees of the holy fathers, and to precedents and canonical definitions, and in no wise differing from the synod of St. Agatho and the rest of his orthodox successors, we shall be found heartily ready to submit to it.' This tractable answer having produced in the Romans a joyful applause, his accusers were ordered to return home, the bishops saying, that though it was provided by the canons that every accuser who was found faulty in the first article of his charge should be heard no further, they, nevertheless, out of reverence for Archbishop Bertwald,

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would not be wanting, but discuss everything in order thoroughly. Whereupon it came to pass, that within four months after there being held seventy little councils,[1] solely or chiefly upon this account, they had all an end as glorious for Wilfrid as ignominious for his accusers. In 704, therefore, the Pope wrote to the Kings Ethelred and Alfrid, and to the Archbishop Bertwald, to restore him to his see. The bull which he sent to those kings ran thus :—

"'To the most eminent lords, Ethelred, king of the Mercians, and Alfrid, king of the provinces of Deira and Bernicia, John the Pope: We rejoice at the accessions, through God's working grace of your excellent religion; discerning the fervour of the faith in you, which, the Lord enlightening your souls, you received by the preaching of the Prince of the Apostles, and now effectually retain, that a yet better accession may fulfil our joy. But the inextricable dissension of some hath afflicted our soul, and made sad the ears of our fellow-priests and the whole Church, which also, with the Lord's assistance, it behoves us to bring to correction, that not being despisers of the pontifical decrees, but obedient sons, ye may together be approved keepers of the pontifical decrees before the Lord, the Judge of all men. For long ago, when, under our predecessor Pope Agatho, of apostolic memory, Bishop Wilfrid, coming hither, appealed to the Apostolic See, his adversaries, who then came hither from Theodore, of venerable memory, archbishop of the

[1] Conciliabula. Eddi Steph.

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Church of Canterbury, and from the Abbess Hilda, of religious memory, to accuse him, being present, the bishops from divers provinces being with the above-named holy Pope here likewise assembled, regularly inquired into the allegations of both parties, and sententially decreed between them: which same sentence his successors, the holy Popes our predecessors, thought good to follow. Neither was the prelate Theodore, of venerable memory (who was sent from this Apostolic See), ever known afterwards to contradict what was done, or send any further accusation to this Apostolic See; but rather, as hath appeared, both from what he declared and by the pontific decrees, submitted to that sentence. It were, therefore, with God's assistance, to be prevented, that no dissension be upheld in one place, whilst everywhere else there is a perfect unanimity both of fellow-priests and people. So much we have thought good to premise concerning affairs past. Touching present matters also we have judged proper to make known to your Christian excellencies, that those who have come hither from the said isle of Britain, and brought accusations against Bishop Wilfrid, he afterwards arriving here with his brethren, they have retorted upon his accusers the very things which they accused him of; whose differences we have for some days procured to be heard before a convention of bishops and priests, who happened to be at present here; before whom all the particulars whatever, which the parties have either in former or fresh writings brought in charge, or they could here find, or was verbally alleged by them, being carefully discussed, have been brought

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to our cognition; till they, the principal persons among whom the contention hath arisen, shall meet together, who, to put an end to all disputes, ought to assemble and sit in council. And, therefore, we admonish Bertwald, prelate of the holy Church of Canterbury, our most reverend brother (whom, by authority of the Prince of the Apostles, we have confirmed archbishop there), to call a synod together with Bishop Wilfrid; and a council being regularly celebrated, that he cause the Bishops Bosa and John to come into the synod; and that he hear what both parties have to say, and consider what they are among themselves willing to agree to; and if so be that by his management he shall be able to determine this regularly at the synod, he does a grateful thing to us and the parties. But, if it otherwise fall out, let him synodically admonish them, that upon his admonitions each party may consider what things will be most convenient for themselves; and then let them come together to this Apostolic See, that what hath not hitherto been determined may be debated and decided in a fuller council; and so they who come in discord may, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, return in peace. Likewise, let every one of them who shall refuse or, what is to be execrated, despise to come, know that he ought to submit himself to a dejection, and be thrown hence, and not received there by any of the prelates or faithful. For he who hath lived disobedient to Christ his Author, cannot be received among His ministers and disciples. Moreover, let your Christian and royal highnesses, for the fear of God and reverence and peace of the Christian faith,

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which the Lord Jesus Christ gave to His disciples, cause a speedy meeting and concurrence in this affair; that these things, of which, by God's inspiration, we have a thorough insight, may take effect; that, for your religious endeavours of this sort, there may be laid up for you a reward in heaven, and that Christ being your protector, you may in this world reign safely, and at length enjoy the blessed society of His eternal kingdom. Wherefore, my most dear sons, remember what the most blessed Agatho, and the rest of the prelates of the Roman Church after him, together with us, in one voice, by apostolic authority, have ordained in this same affair. For be he who he will, who with audacious rashness shall despise what we have done, he shall not go unpunished by God, or, being debarred from heaven, escape without loss. The Most High Grace keep safe your eminences.'"

Never was there upon earth a tribunal so august as that of Rome! While in the local Churches party spirit and factious tumult, the wrath of kings and the strife of prelates, keep all things in effervescence, the patient discernment, the devout tranquillity of deliberation, the unimpassioned disentanglement of truth from falsehood, the kindly suspense, the saintly moderation without respect of persons, the clear-voiced utterance of the decree at last,—how wonderful were all these things in the court of Rome! With profoundest reverence be it spoken, did not this tribunal faintly shadow forth the imperturbed peace, long-suffering, merciful delay yet loving promptitude of the Divine judgments? Earth trembled and was still: for

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many a century was this true of Rome; surely it was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Seventy councils held to sift, to balance, to compare, to adjust what might seem a petty strife in a far-off diocese of a little island! Wilfrid might well have faith in Rome, might well go through all he did to teach his Saxon countrymen the like consoling and reverential trust. The aged Wilfrid—he had *walked* great part of the way to Rome, for all his three-score years and ten: he had walked, at least, from those litora australia of which Eddi speaks; he had gone *pedestri gressu* over rough and smooth, till he came to the Pope's feet, and there he knelt down—fit resting-place, indeed, for a toil-worn Saint. Now he had his journey over again; but first,—Wilfrid forgot not that,—there were the basilicas and holy places to visit for devotion; we have particular reasons for knowing that he had a singular love of those two basilicas Sta. Maria Maggiore, and San Paolo, of which last, in better days, the English sovereigns were the keepers, when St. Paul had not been set against St. Peter. Again did Wilfrid, covetous old man! beg relics to take to his dear England, and purple and silk for the frontals of the altars and the chasubles of the priests; and ample chasubles (not the mean clipped chasubles of our times) St. Wilfrid's priests no doubt had: he would not be sparing of his silk, for he was given to magnificence, like Hugh of Clugny, or Suger of St. Denys. Obedient as he was to St. Benedict in most things, Wilfrid would have been a perfect sophist if any one had urged holy poverty in Church adornments. Once, again,

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over rough and smooth (per plana et aspera), but Eddi does not say *pedestri gressu*, Wilfrid, with his selfsame staff of cheerfulness, trudged like a sturdy pilgrim back to his native land. In years past, St. Theodore had forced a horse upon him, and now Pope John had forbidden the cold water at night, and otherwise retrenched the old man's austerities. But Wilfrid endured this, as he did most things, with an onlooking cheerfulness.

The Alps were cleared, and Wilfrid came at last to Meaux. Meaux and its vicinity had long been noted for hospitality to us Western islanders. Agneric had received St. Columban as a guest at his seat of Champigne, in Brie, two leagues from Meaux. This was in 610. St. Faro was Agneric's son, and he was made bishop of Meaux in 626, and having peopled his diocese with Saints, earned by his own ascetic life the honours of canonisation himself. It was in St. Faro's palace at Meaux that the abbot Adrian spent his winter, while St. Theodore was the guest of Agilbert at Paris. It was to this city of Meaux that Wilfrid came. The stout-hearted old man was manifestly broken with travel; his heart never failed him; indeed his body had been leaning on his spirit this long while; now it could go no farther, and the bishop lay down to die. True, he had ridden from Rome this time, but three-score years and ten require an easier seat than a saddle day after day, for many a weary league. Let St. Bede tell the rest:[1] "Passing through France, on his way back to Britain, on a sudden he fell sick, and the distemper increasing,

[1] V. 19. Dr. Giles's Translation.

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was so ill that he could not ride, but was carried in his bed. Being thus come to the city of Meaux, in France, he lay four days and nights, as if he had been dead, and only by his faint breathing showed that he had any life in him; having continued so four days, without meat or drink, speaking or hearing, he at length, on the fifth day, in the morning, as it were awakening out of a dead sleep, sat up in the bed, and opening his eyes, saw numbers of brethren singing and weeping about him, and fetching a sigh, asked where Acca the priest was? This man, being called, immediately came in, and seeing him thus recovered and able to speak, knelt down, and returned thanks to God, with all the brethren there present. When they had sat awhile, and begun to discourse with much reverence on the heavenly judgments, the bishop ordered the rest to go out for an hour, and spoke to the priest Acca in this manner: 'An awful vision has now appeared to me, which I wish you to hear and keep secret, till I know how God will please to dispose of me. There stood by me a certain person, remarkable for his white garments, telling me he was Michael the archangel, and said, I am sent to save you from death: for the Lord hath granted you life, through the prayers and tears of the disciples, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother Mary of perpetual virginity; wherefore I tell you, that you shall now recover from this sickness; but be ready, for I will return to visit you at the end of four years. But when you come into your country, you shall recover most of the possessions that have been taken from you,

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and shall end your days in perfect peace.' The bishop accordingly recovered, at which all persons rejoiced, and setting forward on his journey arrived in Britain." Doubtless the cause of St. Wilfrid's revealing this secret vision to St. Acca only (who had been brought up by St. Bosa, yet now followed Wilfrid), was partly the blessed Saint's profound humility, and partly his uncertainty whether it might not have been an illusion, and then, if falsified by the event, the knowledge of it might have created in others either profaneness or distrust. Those who receive Divine favours of any sort are usually men little inclined to publish them; even ordinary Christians can understand why this should be. What more humbling, more unspeakably humbling, than an answered prayer? yet the love it stirs breeds, not vocal thanks or hearty utterance, but a breathless hush, because of the Lord's recent nearness to us, or touch upon us.

"Wilfrid," says Eddi, "washed his face and hands with much hilarity," and took some food, and in a few days journeyed to the sea, and, after a prosperous voyage, landed in Kent. St. Bertwald received the papal decrees with becoming reverence, undertook to reverse the harsh judgments of the former synod, and was unfeignedly reconciled to Wilfrid. All this was as it should be. Then there was a regular gathering of Wilfrid's abbots in London, and great rejoicings: this too is refreshing to read of. Then the old man went northwards, not to *King*, but to *Saint*, Ethelred, for he was now a monk at Bardney; Wilfrid had had a hand in this; and when he saw his royal friend,

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crowned with a Catholic tonsure, he wept for joy, and there was kissing and embracing, which Eddi tells us of in a most complacent way; and Kenred, whom Ethelred had made king, promised to observe the Roman decrees, and to restore Wilfrid all his abbeys inviolate. And this, too, was as it should be: for Ethelred, when the Pope's letter was given him, received it on his knees, and that, beyond a doubt, had been a lesson from his friend Wilfrid. But Alfrid, the statesman, he was sullen, as most men are when they have been outwitted. Wilfrid sent to him Badwin a priest, and Alufrid the schoolmaster at Ripon: Alfrid received them mildly, and fixed a time when they should come for his answer. He refused to obey the Pope's decree, or admit Wilfrid; he was determined to have the best of it to the last. But the statesman, Alfrid the Wise, had never done a sillier thing than disobey the commands of Rome. The Pope's letter had ended with a warning, and the warnings of the Church, unheeded, grow into maledictions. The messengers of Wilfrid turned their backs on Driffield, a village by the river Hull in Yorkshire; and as soon as they were gone, the king was seized with a sore disease, and lost the use of all his limbs. Finding himself at death's door, he sent for the abbesses Elfleda and Edilburga, and confessed his sin in thus malignantly persecuting Wilfrid in their presence and before other witnesses, adding, "If Wilfrid could have come soon enough to me, on my sending for him, I would immediately have made amends for my offence. For I had vowed to God and St. Peter, if I had got well of this infirmity, to observe all

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things according to the holy Wilfrid's mind, and the judgment of the Apostolic See. But, as it pleases God I shall die, I require, in the Name of God, whoever succeeds me, to make peace and agreement with Bishop Wilfrid for the peace of mine and his own soul." So Alfrid died. Had he thrown his wisdom upon the side of God's Church, what might not this royal scholar have done for the north; as it was, his reign left no trace behind; he squandered his talents in persecuting a bishop, in order to free the State from the salutary restraints of the Church, and the bishop outwitted the scholar in his craft, called in Rome, and Rome beat the king to the ground. The same edifying drama has been enacted over and over again for the instruction of the world: yet States are slow learners: they die before their nonage is past; while the Church remains old in years and wisdom, young in power and freshness.

Alfrid died in 705, and Eadulf succeeded him. To him Wilfrid came, accompanied by the king's own son, who appears to have been receiving his education in the monastery of Ripon, sending messengers before him. But the king's counsellors were strong and well: they derided the deathbed repentance of the late monarch; they deemed his intellect enfeebled by disease. By their advice, Eadulf answered Wilfrid's messengers austerely, and said, "I swear by my life, if he does not depart my kingdom in six days' time, as many of his companions as I find shall be put to death." But the malediction in no long while found out Eadulf also. A conspiracy was raised against him by the nobility,

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for he was a usurper, and he was deposed and slain in two months. Then Osred, Alfrid's son, succeeded; and St. Bertwald called a council on the Nidd, and Wilfrid was there, and Bosa, and John of Beverley, and Eadbert of Lindisfarne, five canonised Saints, at that time enemies: and the archbishop spoke, and said that Rome must be obeyed; and Bosa, and John, and Eadbert opposed, and Elfleda testified to Alfrid's dying words. St. Wilfrid was humble, and outworn, and he knew the number of his days; and he gave up his bishoprics, for his battle was won, and he had not fought it for himself, but for a principle which that day, on the banks of the Nidd, men bowed to in fear and reverence. And Berectfrid, a great noble, spoke, and said that, in the siege of Bamborough, when they were in straits, and Eadulf's men pressed them hard, they vowed, if they should conquer, to follow Alfrid's dying words, and obey the See of Rome. And Wilfrid asked for his abbeys of Ripon and of Hexham, and would have no more; and they gave him what he asked. And the adverse bishops kissed one another, and mass was sung by the Nidd side, and the communion was not one of form only, but of heart also,—a shadow, yet a truthful shadow, of that unimaginable communion which now is in heaven between those beatified spirits St. Bertwald, St. Wilfrid, St. Bosa, St. John of Beverley, St. Eadbert, and St. Elfleda; by whose helpful intercession may we be aided now in the forlornness of our fight!

Wilfrid now prepared himself to die, according to the warning given him by the Captain of the

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Heavenly Hosts. He appears to have spent his time, as was natural, between the abbeys of Hexham and of Ripon. Sorrow follows joy; or, as Eddi expresses it, when he has glowingly described the communion of the bishops, lætitia hujus sæculi luctu miscebitur, et omnis res ad finem respicit. But one thing remains to be said: we have not alluded to St. Wilfrid's doctrines. The blessed Pope, St. Agatho, thought it of importance that Wilfrid should subscribe the acts of the Roman Council against the Monothelites as representing the faith of the Church of *northern* England; it may be well to advert for a while, then, to what this great man taught the Saxons of his day. Seeing that he gave up his life to the great work of asserting the Divine authority of Rome, we may be sure his doctrine was simply and purely that of the holy Roman Church in the seventh century. Yet it is interesting to gather up the few indications of it given us in St. Bede. We have already seen, in the heavenly vision at Meaux, the potency of our blessed Lady's intercession authenticated in a very solemn way, even by the mouth of the great Archangel. There is a story, too, connected with the battle in which the young prince Elfwin was slain, according to Wilfrid's prediction, wherein we are told of a chained prisoner, whose chains miraculously fell off at a certain hour every day, namely, the hour of tierce, which was then the ordinary time for mass; and it was found that his brother, a priest, believing him dead, did actually say mass for the repose of his soul daily at that hour; and universal belief coupled the two things. Looking at it simply as

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something to which men gave credence, whether fact or not, the story shows that the practice of saying mass *with a particular intention*, was common in the Saxon Church of that age; and that so great was the reverence for the Blessed Sacrifice, that men readily believed in miraculous consequences following. But there is a narrative of the year 696, when Wilfrid was acting as bishop of Lichfield, which belongs to Wilfrid's own diocese, and throws light on some interesting and debated questions, which almost all serious persons must have turned their minds to more or less, as relating to the fortunes of their own souls, and what doing or suffering may yet lie before them. We will give the story in St. Bede's own words, again putting it forward as, whether fact or not, something undoubtedly *historical* because it was believed, and so *historically* testifying to the belief the men of Wilfrid's diocese had about such matters. In itself, and as coming from St. Bede, some, perhaps, will get solemn thoughts from it, and so be edified.

"At this time a memorable miracle,[1] and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be saved from the death of the soul, a certain person, who had been some time dead, rose again to life, and related many remarkable things he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to take notice of. There was a master of a family in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Cuningham, who led a religious life, as did also all that belonged

[1] Bede, v. 13. Giles's Translation. A modern Catholic historian considers it as a trance, not as death.

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to him. This man fell sick, and his distemper daily increasing, being brought to extremity, he died in the beginning of the night; but in the morning early he suddenly came to life again, and sat up; upon which all those that sat about the body, weeping, fled away in a great fright, only his wife, who loved him best, though in a great consternation and trembling, remained with him. He, comforting her, said, 'Fear not, for I am now truly risen from death, and permitted again to live among men: however, I am not to live hereafter as I was wont, but from henceforward after a very different manner.' Then rising immediately, he repaired to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, immediately divided all his substance into three parts; one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third belonging to himself, he instantly distributed among the poor. Not long after he repaired to the monastery of Melros, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Twede; and having been shaven, went into a private dwelling, which the abbot had provided, where he continued till the day of his death, in such extraordinary contrition of mind and body, that though his tongue had been silent, his life declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, which others knew nothing of.

"Thus he related what he had seen. 'He that led me had a shining countenance and a bright garment, and we went on silently, as I thought, towards the north-east. Walking on, we came to a vale of great breadth and depth, but of infinite

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length: on the left it appeared full of dreadful flames; the other side was no less horrid for violent hail and cold snow flying in all directions. Both places were full of men's souls, which seemed by turns to be tossed from one side to the other, as it were by a violent storm; for when the wretches could no longer endure the excess of heat, they leaped into the middle of the cutting cold; and finding no rest there, they leaped back again into the middle of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of deformed spirits were thus alternately tormented far and near, as far as could be seen, without any intermission, I began to think that this perhaps might be hell, of whose intolerable flames I had often heard talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, "Do not believe so, for this is not the hell you imagine."

"'When he had conducted me, much frightened with that horrid spectacle, by degrees, to the farther end, on a sudden I saw the place begin to grow dusk and filled with darkness. When I came into it, the darkness, by degrees, grew so thick, that I could see nothing besides it and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on through the shades of night, on a sudden there appeared before us frequent globes of black flames rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been conducted thither, my leader suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and this horrid vision, whilst those same globes of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up and at another

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fell back into the bottom of the abyss; and I observed that all the flames, as they ascended, were full of human souls, which, like sparks flying up with smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapour of the fire ceased, dropped down into the depth below. Moreover, an insufferable stench came forth with the vapours, and filled all those dark places.

"'Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end I must expect, on a sudden I heard behind me the noise of a most hideous and wretched lamentation, and at the same time a loud laughing, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I observed a gang of evil spirits dragging the howling and lamenting souls of men into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves laughed and rejoiced. Among those men, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clergyman, a layman, and a woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and much perplexed me with their glaring eyes and the stinking fire which proceeded from their mouths and nostrils; and threatened to lay hold on me with burning tongs, which they had in their hands, yet they durst not touch me, though

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they frightened me. Being thus on all sides enclosed with enemies and darkness, and looking about on every side for assistance, there appeared behind me, on the way that I came, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which increased by degrees, and came rapidly towards me: when it drew near, all those evil spirits that sought to carry me away with their tongs, dispersed and fled.

"'He, whose approach put them to flight, was the same that had led me before; who, then turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were, towards the south-east, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, conducted me into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast wall before us, the length and height of which, in every direction, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing no door, window, or path through it. When we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and within it was a vast and delightful field, so full of fragrant flowers that the odour of its delightful sweetness immediately dispelled the stink of the dark furnace, which had pierced me through and through. So great was the light in this place, that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the sun in its meridian height. In this field were innumerable assemblies of men in white, and many companies seated together rejoicing. As he led me through the midst of these happy inhabitants, I began to think that this might, perhaps, be the kingdom of heaven,

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of which I had often heard so much. He answered to my thought, saying, "This is not the kingdom of heaven, as you imagine."

"'When we had passed those mansions of blessed souls and gone farther on, I discovered before me a much more beautiful light, and therein heard sweet voices of persons singing, and so wonderful a fragrancy proceeded from the place, that the other which I had before thought most delicious, then seemed to me but very indifferent; even as that extraordinary brightness of the flowery field, compared with this, appeared mean and inconsiderable. When I began to hope we should enter that delightful place, my guide, on a sudden, stood still; and then turning back, led me back by the way we came.

"'When we returned to those joyful mansions of the souls in white, he said to me, "Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?" I answered I did not; and then he replied, "That vale you saw so dreadful for consuming flames and cutting cold is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so depart this life; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of heaven at the day of judgment; but many are relieved before the day of judgment by the prayers, alms, and fasting of the living, and more especially by masses. That fiery and stinking pit which you saw is the mouth of hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be

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delivered to all eternity. This flowery place, in which you see these most beautiful young people, so bright and merry, is that into which the souls of those are received who depart the body in good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgment, see Christ, and partake of the joys of His kingdom; for whoever are perfect in thought, word, and deed, as soon as they depart the body, immediately enter into the kingdom of heaven; in the neighbourhood whereof that place is, where you heard the sound of sweet singing, with the fragrant odour and bright light. As for you, who are now to return to your body, and live among men again, if you will endeavour nicely to examine your actions, and direct your speech and behaviour in righteousness and simplicity, you shall, after death, have a place of residence among these joyful troops of blessed souls; for when I left you for a while, it was to know how you were to be disposed of." When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to my body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. However, I durst not ask him any questions; but in the meantime, on a sudden, I found myself alive among men.'

"Now these and other things which this man of God saw, he would not relate to slothful persons and such as lived negligently; but only to those who, being terrified with the dread of torments, or delighted with the hopes of heavenly joys, would make use of his words to advance in piety. In

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the neighbourhood of his cell lived one Hemgils, a monk eminent in the priesthood, which he honoured by his good works; he is still living, and leading a solitary life in Ireland, supporting his declining age with coarse bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and asking several questions, heard of him all the particulars of what he had seen when separated from his body; by whose relation we also came to the knowledge of those few particulars which we have briefly set down. He also related his visions to King Alfrid, a man most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard, that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above mentioned, and received the monastic tonsure; and the said king, when he happened to be in those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the religious and humble abbot and priest, Ethelwald, presided over the monastery, and now with worthy conduct possesses the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne.

"He had a more private place of residence assigned him in that monastery, where he might apply himself to the service of his Creator in continual prayer. And as that place lay on the bank of the river he was wont often to go into the same to do penance in his body, and many times to dip quite under the water, and to continue saying psalms or prayers in the same as long as he could endure it, standing still sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes to the neck in water; and when he went out from thence ashore, he never took off his cold and frozen garments till they grew warm and dry on his body. And when in the winter the half-

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broken pieces of ice were swimming about him, which he had himself broken to make room to stand or dip himself in the river, those who beheld it would say, 'It is wonderful, brother Drithelm, [for so he was called,] that you are able to endure such violent cold;' he simply answered, for he was a man of much simplicity and indifferent wit, 'I have seen greater cold.' And when they said, 'It is strange that you will endure such austerity;' he replied, 'I have seen more austerity.' Thus he continued, through an indefatigable desire of heavenly bliss, to subdue his aged body with daily fasting, till the day of his being called away; and he forwarded the salvation of many by his words and example."

We know from Holy Scripture that God has been pleased to teach His servants by visions and dreams; we will not leave this story of brother Drithelm standing by itself. Thus a conversion to a godly life was worked in what was perhaps a trance in the seventh century; and thus, to pass onward to the ninth, dreamed the great St. Anscar, the Apostle of Scandinavia, during his noviciate at Old Corbey—a dream which, the historian says, had great influence over his future life. In his sleep he thought he was dying, while invoking the aid of St. Peter and St. John;[1]

"And when, as it seemed to him, his soul left his body, and assumed one of far greater beauty—one free from human imperfections—at that moment there appeared the two just mentioned. One of

[1] Dunham, ii. 207.

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them, much older than the other, with plain, silvery, yet close-set hair, with a ruddy countenance, yet serious look, with a garment white and coloured, of a low stature, he easily recognised as St. Peter. The other, much taller and younger, bearded and curly-haired, with a thin yet smiling countenance, and in an embroidered vestment, he also intuitively knew as St. John. They placed themselves at each side of him. And his soul, as he thought, being wonderfully conducted by those Saints, proceeded, without effort, through the immense light which filled the universe, until it arrived at a place which by intuition he certainly knew to be purgatory, where his conductors left him. There he sustained many grievous things, the chief of which seemed impenetrable darkness, heavy oppression, and suffocation; and though his memory failed him as to the details of his situation, he yet remembered enough to wonder how such pain could exist. And having been tormented, as he thought, about three days—which space, such was the extreme severity of his suffering, appeared to him a thousand years,[1] —the two Saints reappeared, took their stations by him, and with countenances much more joyful than before, they conducted him much more de-

[1] So it is related in the life of San Francesco di Geronimo, that he said to a nun somewhat impatient in sickness, that possibly her soul would be purified by it, and she would have a shorter time to stay in purgatory. Soon after her death the Saint asked another of the sisterhood how long it was since that nun had died. She answered, two days. Upon which, as if some revelation had been made to him, he cried out, Oh le gravi pene del Purgatorio! È venuto a dolersi meco colei di non essere stata mantenuta la parola del breve patire; giacchè da più anni è tormentata in quel carcere. *De Bonis. Ristret. Storic.*, p. 16.

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lightfully through greater splendour, without motion and without path. To use his own words, 'I saw long ranks of Saints, some near, some in the distant ether, stretching from the east, yet looking towards it; praising Him who appeared in the east, adoring Him, some with bowed heads, others with erect countenances and open hands. And when we came to the east, behold twenty-four elders, sitting, according as it is written in the Apocalypse, on their thrones, with an ample space before them; these, also, looking reverently towards the east, uttered unspeakable praises to the Lord. And as they thus sang, the ineffable harmony and sweetness penetrated into my soul; yet, on my return to the body, I lost the impression. In that east was a wonderful splendour, a light inaccessible, dazzling, and boundless, in which was contained every lovely colour, and every delight; and all the legions of Saints who stood rejoicing around it, derived happiness from it. And this splendour was so boundless, that I could discern neither the beginning nor end. And even when I was able to look at it a little more narrowly, I could not discern the inward recesses of that immense glory, but the surface only; yet could I believe Him to be present, 'on whom,' according to St. Peter, 'angels desire to look': for from Him proceeded that consuming brightness in which the angelic legions were clothed. He appeared to be in all, and all in Him: outwardly He surrounded all; inwardly all were sustained and governed by Him; above He protected them, below He upheld them. There was no sun or moon, no heaven or earth. Yet this glory was not

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of that species which pains and blinds; it was, on the contrary, most agreeable to the eyes. And when I said that the elders were sitting, I might have said, they all sat in Him; for there was nothing corporeal, but all was incorporeal, though the form was bodily,—all ineffably beautiful. The glory proceeding from Him encompassed them about like the rainbow. And when I was brought by the said Apostles before that immensity of glory, where the majesty of the Highest seemed to be, a Voice, indescribably sweet, yet awfully distinct, capable of pervading all space, said unto me, 'Depart, and when thou hast won the martyr's crown, return unto me'! At these words the concourse of Saints, hitherto sweetly singing, were silent, and worshipped with subdued looks."

On these two narratives no comment shall be made, further than to remind the reader, that God is ever with His Church; and who shall circumscribe His ways, or limit the *fashion* of His doings?

Some time in the year 707, an abbot was travelling on horseback, attended by a few monks, on his road from Hexham to Ripon. The old man did not sit upright on his horse, but stooped very much; rode with evident pain, and any passer-by might have told that he was paralytic. In truth, the abbot was seventy-three years old, and the cold, and hunger, and watching of a monk's life may well go for another score of years; so that the abbot had reason to stoop sadly as he went. Apparently, he was well known upon that road between Hexham and Ripon; the peasants left their labour as he passed, to beg his blessing:

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women knelt in the mire, and lifted up their little ones, content if so be the eye of the lord abbot fell upon them, and he signed the Cross over the people as he went. Then at times the old man fell into a reverie; he was riding among the green lanes of Yorkshire, but in thought he was treading the streets of magnificent Rome. One by one he was visiting the holy places: he was kneeling now at the double tomb upon the Vatican, and then he was skirting the Prati del Popolo Romano, and through the gate to the basilica of St. Paul, and his thoughts dwelt there long; and then outside the walls he went, scarcely lifting up his eyes to look at the blue ridge of the Latin hills, till he came to St. Sebastian's, which stands above the Catacombs; and after that he passed onward to the Lateran, the Mother Church of all the world, the cathedral of Rome. His next pilgrimage was not long, for down the avenue of trees he could see the basilica of Holy Cross, and thinking of St. Helena, he went there too: he visited St. Laurence's also, which looks toward the Sabine Hills, and then returning into the Holy City, he rested long on that hill-top where St. Mary Major's stands, for that was the church the lord abbot loved most of all; it was his haven in the tumults of noisy Rome. So the abbot dreamed, and prayed, and dreamed again. He saw not the Yorkshire lanes; he smelled not the golden furze on the green commons; the open glade, the tangled copse, the dewy fern, the starting deer, the pebbly stream, the soft-voiced cushat,—he neither heard nor saw such things as these, for the lord abbot was in Rome.

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> The oak, the ash, the bonny ivy tree,
> They flourish best at hame i' the north countrie.

But it was the cypress and the palm which the abbot saw, the black spires and the fan-like leaves mixing with many a Roman campanile. It was there that I found justice, said he, half-aloud; it is there I will go to pass the little remnant of my days, and weep for my many sins. The monks heard, but they interrupted not. So St. Wilfrid rode on, still in Rome; but in no long time he fell forward on his horse's neck; it was another fit, a second seizure of paralysis, such as he had had at Meaux. Speechless, and without motion, he was borne to a house by his monks. Bad news fly fast; abbots came, and priests, and monks, and they surrounded Wilfrid's bed, and prayed, and God heard their prayers, and the abbot's life was spared for a little while longer. But Wilfrid knew that St. Michael's coming would not be long delayed; so he came to Ripon, and began to set his house in order. The lord abbot was poor in spirit, as ever Saint could be; but the meek man, according to the promise, had inherited the earth.

Two abbots, and some brethren chosen for their faithfulness, were bidden to open the treasury, and bring out the gold and silver and the precious stones, and lay them before his eyes. A strange sight, surely, for a dying Saint! but it was not to feed his eyes with pride, as Hezekiah had done when he paraded the ambassador through his treasure-house. The brethren were bidden to divide the goods into four heaps; then the lord

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abbot sat up, and spake thus:[1] "Know, my dearest brethren, that it hath been some while my thought to see once more the seat of St. Peter, where my wrongs were redressed, and, God willing, to finish my life there; and I would take with me the best of these four heaps and offer it at the churches of St. Mary the Lord's Mother, and St. Paul the Apostle, for the weal of my soul. But if God should provide otherwise (and old men's plans are oft-times frustrated), and if the hour of my death should be beforehand with me, I charge you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to send my gifts to those churches. Of the other three heaps, give one to the poor for the redemption of my soul; and another let the priors of Ripon and Hexham divide between them, that by gifts they may win kindness from kings and bishops; and the last do ye give as portions to those who have borne laborious company with me in my long exiles." Then the lord abbot paused to take breath, for he was weak and his few words had wearied him, and haply a gush of affectionate memories made his heart swell, when he spoke of the companions of his exile. But he gathered up his strength again, and said, "Remember, brethren, that I appoint the priest Tatbert, who up to this day hath been my inseparable companion, prior of this monastery of Ripon, to hold my place so long as I shall live. I have made all these appointments that the archangel Michael, when he visiteth me, may find me prepared; for many tokens of my death haunt me now." Then the great bell of the convent sounded,

[1] Eddi Steph., lix.

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and all the monks of Ripon entered the chapter, and the lord abbot went in to them, the feeble old man leaning on his crosier: but he could not stand to speak; therefore he sat down and addressed his beloved family: "Our most reverend brother Celin has long laboured in the Lord, as prior, for our due observance; and now will I no longer deny his wish to return to his old conversation in desert places, and to follow, as heretofore, the contemplative life for the which he thirsteth. But I admonish you, brethren, to continue the regular institute of your lives, until it please God that I come again among you; for now these two abbots, Tibba and Æbba, are come from Kenred, king of the Mercians, inviting me to confer with him, and the state of our monasteries in those parts induces me to go: and the king promises to dispose his entire life as I shall advise; but, God willing, I will return to you again. If, however, as my frequent infirmities give me reason to expect, anything else befall me, remember, that, whomsoever these witnesses sitting here, Tibba and Æbba abbots, Tatbert and Hadufrid priests, and Alufrid master, shall bring from me, ye shall constitute your abbot, and pay to him the same obedience ye have vowed to God and to me." Then the monks fell upon their knees, and they bowed their heads to the very ground, and wept bitterly; and as they wept they promised obedience in broken words, and all the brotherhood in chapter fell prostrate on the earth, and the old lord abbot blessed them, and commended them to the Lord, and then he went his way, and they saw his face no more.

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Then eighteen months rolled away; and Wilfrid went about visiting and settling his many monasteries; and even if we knew of them, it would not be well to relate the sorrowful chapters wherein he presided, valediction after valediction, a mere melancholy chronicle of farewells; for, indeed, it would be too harrowing. By this time we have come to love that young boy Wilfrid that left his home, a child of thirteen, in full armour, as a mimic knight—we have come to love him for the good Saxon heart that was in him: he has done battle, like a valiant soldier that he was, for our holy mother the Church; he has fought with the great world, and beaten it, oh how manfully and thoroughly! and we dare not wholly love the feeble, stooping abbot; we dare not wholly love him because of the marvellous gifts that are in him, which call for reverence, and, at least, a humbler love. And like a good Saxon prince, too, did Kenred redeem his promise of putting his life at Wilfrid's disposal; for he and Offa, two kings, left the world, and went to Rome, and there received St. Peter's crown in the tonsure of humble monks.

Now our Blessed Lady, the Mother of God, appeared to Bishop Egwin of Worcester in some fields by Evesham; and the bishop built an abbey there, and the monk-kings, Kenred and Offa, endowed it richly, and Pope Constantine exempted it from all exactions, "to the end that the monks serving God there, according to the Rule of St. Benedict, might pass their lives in quietness, without any disturbance": and Egwin went to Rome with the two kings, and the Pope sat in the Lateran

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Church, and the charter of Evesham was laid before him, and the pontiff confirmed it with a ready mind. And the Register of Evesham says, "Pope Constantine being a witness of these kings' munificence, and having been informed of the wonderfully gracious visitation by which our Blessed Lady had vouchsafed to dignify the province of the Mercians, admonished the holy Archbishop Bertwald to publish the great wonders of our Lord; and for that purpose to assemble a synod of the whole kingdom, in which he should in the name of the said Pope denunciate to all princes, nobles, bishops, and other ecclesiastics the confirmation which he had given to the endowments of the said monastery made by the said kings, together with many privileges and exemptions by himself bestowed upon it, to the end, said he, that there should be restored a congregation of monks, who should incessantly serve our Lord according to the Rule of the glorious St. Benedict, which institute as yet is rarely observed in those parts.[1] Moreover, he enjoined him and his successors, with the assent of Egwin, bishop of that diocese, to take into their care and protection the said monastery, and in case any tyrants or oppressors should invade the rights or possessions of it, to smite them with the rod of excommunication." In truth, but a little land would have made the Evesham Benedictines rich, for the tower of St. Lawrence looks over a very Eden of fertility. So when St. Bertwald received the Pope's

[1] Worcestershire lay out of the line of Wilfrid's monasteries.

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letter he convened a synod at Alncester, on the Alne, seven miles from Evesham, where the kings of Mercia had a goodly palace; and there the primate published the matter, and the Pope's charter and the royal grants were read; and very touchingly, as to the man who had introduced the Benedictine Rule into Mercia, the archbishop turned to Wilfrid, and imposed upon the old man the honourable duty of consecrating the new abbey. This was the last public act of Wilfrid's life; it was the act of a bishop. We mentioned before the reconciliation of St. Theodore and himself, then that holy communion by the Nidd, and now the last thing we have to tell bespeaks kindliness, peaceable thoughts, and befitting honour between St. Bertwald and himself. Whatever came of other men, Saints could not well help understanding Wilfrid at the last.

For quiet pastoral beauty the Nen is a sweet river, winding like a serpent, not in the romantic prison of a narrow woody vale, but claiming as its own a region of blythe green meadows, multitudinous churches, and full often fringes of deepest summer foliage, varying its usual border of wide sheep-spotted fields. The frowning front of Peterborough Minster looks up this smiling valley; and to one who wanders up the stream, turning his back on the abbey, the spires of Fletton and of Stanground, and the little tower of Woodstone, many a sweet sight presents itself. When the woods of Milton give way to the hedgeless fields, the "mother church" of Caistor, where St. Kyneburga dwelt, is seen, and the churches of Water

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Newton, Stibbington, and Wansford come to the river's brink; then the low tower of Yarwell succeeds, and the beautiful spire of Nassington, hiding itself amid the poplars it so much resembles; while through the whole reach, a beacon never missing, the tall and lordly tower of Elton on its hill-top shoots up out of the bosom of princely woods, looking down on the octagon of Fotheringay, where Queen Mary laid "her tired head upon the block"; there to the left the interesting church of Warmington stands a little retired from the stream, while Cotterstock and Tansor stand opposite each other on the shore: and as Peterborough Minster looks up this quiet valley, so down it, visible for many a mile, the fretted spire of Oundle, shooting up into the blue sky, looks like a sentinel, from every point a beautiful, indeed an exquisite, thing for the eye to rest upon. Over this region Wilfrid's spirit once rested, and hither did he come to die; the gates of his[1] monastery of Oundle, or Avondale, closed upon the care-broken abbot; and they opened for his holy body to be borne in funeral pomp to Ripon.

There, in the peaceful seclusion of Oundle, St. Michael's visit came to the aged abbot. He spoke a few words to the brotherhood, but not many, for he was very weak. As he rode to Oundle

[1] Bishop Patrick, and all the Peterborough antiquaries, stoutly maintain that this monastery did not belong to Wilfrid, but was a cell of Medehampstede. The truth is probably stated by Smith:—Petroburgenses aiunt hoc monasterium Undalense semper ad se pertinuisse, nec fuisse unquam Wilfridi monasterium, sed Eddius et ex eo Beda aliter. Galeus conjicit primo fuisse Wilfridi, postea ad Petroburgenses spectasse. *Not. in Bed.*

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(equitantibus illis per viam) he had felt the approaches of death, and he made a general confession of his whole life to Tatbert: then he summed up and named all the lands belonging to the different monasteries, and appointed St. Acca over Hexham: all this was done on horseback; so when he entered the monastery he had nothing left to do, but to give the monks his benediction, and to die. He lay upon his bed silent and almost motionless; night and day the chanting never ceased around, though the monks had much ado to chant, so bitterly they wept. Still the solemn chant went on, and the brethren came to the 103rd Psalm, and sweetly still and solemnly they sang the words, Emittes spiritum tuum, et creabuntur, et renovabis faciem terræ; and the words stirred within the abbot's soul, and the emotion tranquilly dislodged his lingering life. On his pillow lay a wicker box with the Lord's Body in it, and a glass vial with the Most Precious Blood;[1] he turned his head gently on his cheek, and without a groan or even an audible sigh, he gave back his spirit to Almighty God. "In the hour of his expiration there was heard a sweet melody of birds, and clapping of their wings, as if they were flying up to heaven, but not one bird could be seen; and the same thing happening several times during the solemn procession when his body was transported, certain devout and prudent persons then present interpreted it to be an assembly of angels, which, accord-

[1] Vimineo condens Corpus Kyriale canistro,
Exhausit vitro vitalem digne cruorem.
Carm. Fridegodi.

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ing as had been promised him, were come to conduct his soul to heaven."[1]

Many were the Mercian abbots who thronged to the fair town of Oundle, when Wilfrid's death was known, in order to do honour to his blessed body. One of them, named Bucula, took off his garment and spread it on the ground, and over it they pitched a tent, and on the abbot's robe they laid St. Wilfrid's body with gentle reverence. Then the clergy put on their vestments, and sang psalms; and as they sang, they washed the Saint's body; and ever as they paused in singing, they heard the bird-like melody and the wafture of unseen wings above them, and they wondered, and sang on, looking one upon another, and speaking not. Over the place where the washing took place, a little cell was built, and a wooden cross erected, and many were the miracles which afterwards the Lord wrought there for the sick folk of Northampton and of Huntingdon. There they wrapped the body in a winding-sheet, and laid it in a car, and bore it all the way to Ripon, chanting as they went; and they thought of all the abbot's life, his six-and-seventy years of toil and care, of hardness to himself and tender-heartedness to others; and they thought of the six-and-forty years of his episcopate, and they tried to sum up all the priests and deacons he had ordained, and the churches he had consecrated, and they could not, for the number

[1] Some make the 12th of October the day of his death; some the 24th of April; the latter say Matthew Westminst. confounded the last translation of his relics at Canterbury with the day of his death at Oundle.

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was amazing. And so they went upon their way to Ripon, Tatbert, the new abbot, going with them; and when they crossed the Ure, they laid the body in the Church of St. Peter, which Wilfrid himself had consecrated. Moreover, abbot Tatbert sent one of Wilfrid's[1] vestments to the abbess Kynedrid, desiring her to wash it, for it was soiled with the feet of the attendants treading on it where it had trailed upon the ground: and an old nun, who had lost the use of her arm, had faith that the water wherein the vestment was washed would heal her; and either her faith, or the water, through the mercy of God, did so. Not long after, a band of exiled nobles went up the valley of the pastoral Nen, burning and pillaging for spite, and not through need; and they saw far off, on the side of the mount, the monastery of Oundle, and they came and set fire to it; but one part of the building would not burn; it was the cell where Wilfrid died: they threw dry straw upon the flames, but the straw was bidden to forego its usual nature, and instead of kindling, it put out the fire. One of the most daring of the band, beholding the cell full of dry straw, went in to set it on fire; but when he had entered, he beheld a young man in white with a golden cross in his hand, and the noble rushed out affrighted, saying, Let us depart, the angel of the Lord defends this cell. Now there was round the monastery at Oundle a great thorn hedge, and this had taken fire; but when the flames approached from one direction St.

[1] Syndonem *suam*, says Eddius; but the context shows the meaning given in the text to be the most probable.

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Wilfrid's cell, and from the other the wooden cross where his body had been washed, they sank down like obedient things, and went out.[1] At Ripon, too, were signs and wonders manifold. Upon St. Wilfrid's anniversary, when deep fear of the temporal powers over-shadowed the minds of the abbots, because Wilfrid, their great shield, was taken away, while they were keeping the vigil inside the church, some monks out of doors beheld a miraculous ring of white light stretched round about the monastery. But even the sight of a miracle was not cause enough to infringe holy obedience: St. Benedict, in the forty-second chapter of his Rule, enjoins silence through the night after compline has been sung: but in the morning the monks told their brethren what vision had been vouchsafed to them, and the rest were sad because they had not been cheered by it as well. But in the evening of the feast, at compline time, the abbots and monks went out into the twilight, and again the marvellous cincture appeared, rising up out of the spot where the bishop's tomb was, and clasping in its luminous embrace the whole of his dear monastery; it was rainbow-like, only without hues, but of pearly white: and the abbots and the monks understood how that the intercession of the Saints is the wall of the Divine help round about the vineyard of the Lord. Montes in circuitu ejus, et Dominus in

[1] "As I rode through Oundle in April 1723, I saw there a very ancient chapel, now converted into a barn or workhouse, which I am persuaded by the great antiquity of its structure, belonged heretofore to that very monastery wherein Wilfrid, our founder, died." Peck. Hist. Stamford, ii. 46.

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circuitu populi sui, ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum. These marvels once found faith, and where they found faith, were they not very blissful consolations? I do not say we *must* believe them, but they *make* me say, Magnus Dominus, et laudabilis nimis in civitate Dei nostri, in monte sancto ejus. Fundatur exsultatione universæ terræ Mons Sion, latera aquilonis, civitas Regis magni.

Two hundred and fifty years St. Wilfrid's body lay at Ripon: but the ravages of the Danes were fearful there; so, in 959, his relics were translated to Canterbury by St. Odo, who laid them under the high altar, and Lanfranc enshrined them: St. Anselm laid them at the north side of the altar; they now rest hard by the bones of that gentle-mannered and meek-hearted prelate, Reginald Pole, the last primate of Catholic England. Si conversi in corde suo, in terra ad quam captivi ducti fuerant, egerint pœnitentiam, et deprecati Te fuerint in terra captivitatis suæ, dicentes: Peccavimus, inique fecimus, injuste egimus; et reversi fuerint ad Te in toto corde suo, et in tota anima sua, in terra captivitatis suæ ad quam ducti sunt, adorabunt Te contra viam terræ suæ quam dedisti patribus eorum, et urbis quam elegisti, et domus quam ædificavi nomini Tuo: Tu exaudies de cælo, hoc est, de firmo habitaculo Tuo, preces eorum, et facias judicium, et dimittas populo Tuo, quamvis peccatori.

We have now traced St. Wilfrid's course through all his weary and perplexing strifes: let us add a word or two upon his life. It was one of the deep, yet startling sayings of De Rancé, that a Christian ought to buy enemies, and that their worth was their weight in

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gold;[1] and if such be their value in the work of sanctification, how amply was Wilfrid provided with that discipline! Yet his making so many enemies, and those so often Saints, may require a little explanation. We do not at all mean to say that Wilfrid may not have received, in humbling compensation for his great gifts, an irritability of temper, and something of an unamiable pertinacity; it may have been so. But, without any such supposition, the place he filled, and the work he did, do of themselves sufficiently account for this painful phenomenon in his biography. True it was, that St. Theodore had to retrieve the honour of Rome in the south, just as Wilfrid had to do so in the north. But Theodore had only to confront remissness, dissoluteness, and the like, in reforming which he had a strong public opinion going along with him; whereas Wilfrid stood in the face of a strict and holy, albeit uncatholic, system, whose Saints had been the honoured missionaries and bishops of Northumberland. In men's eyes he was experimentalising; he was breaking down that which had obviously much good about it. Moderate men would not know what to think, what to make of his work: they could not tell where it would end; so their impulse would be to hold back, and in holding back they would get frightened. Wilfrid made no secret at all of what his work was; it was the thorough Romanising of the Northumbrian Church; and there is really something so very awful about Rome, either for

[1] Un Chrétien devrait acheter des ennemis au poids de l'or.

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good or ill, that we cannot wonder at men becoming timorous, when the hardier zeal of others drags them reluctantly into the presence of such an exciting change. All this, of course, was against Wilfrid. Then, again, when a Church is not in a pure state, which the Northumbrian Church of those days was not, for it was corrupted with Erastianism, she distrusts the zeal of her own sons: she has not the heart to embrace a magnificent purpose; while, at the same time, there is not the courage in her to crush it at once; so that her opposition, so to speak, works sideways; and though it looks merely undignified to a spectator, it, nevertheless, enthrals for a time activity and zeal, and the repression is of course painful even to the most undaunted. All this, too, was against Wilfrid. Yet he fought his way through it, as men in such cases always must, by personal suffering, helped not a little by his true Yorkshire cheerfulness. But it may be said that he failed, for in the end he gave up his bishopric. The Saints never fail, yet they ever seem to fail. They fight for a principle, and that principle is embodied in certain ends; and God's will is, that those ends should ever give way and break under them, lest they should rest in the end, forget the principle, cry victory too soon, and leave a *Divine* End incomplete. He fought for Rome; he pledged himself in youth to Rome; he did in public life what St. Benedict Biscop did in literature and private life, spread Roman influences; Rome came to him in a shape he did not expect, in sufferings; and sufferings providentially led to

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appeals, and appeals to fear of Rome; he fought, not for York, but for Rome; and so he left York where he did not find it, chained to St. Peter's chair: this was his work, divined so early as his boyish studies in the library of Lindisfarne; and when he died at Oundle, was one tittle of it left undone?

Eadhed has now a successor. After the lapse of so many centuries, a second bishop sits on the throne of Ripon. And is there no trace of the abbot Wilfrid? Yes—the townsmen of his conventual city know one Sunday in the year by the name of Wilfrid Sunday. How melancholy! a name, not a thing, a shadow with not enough of cognisable substance to be reproachful to those who play with it. Miserable indeed! the faith that Wilfrid lives and intercedes, is it widely spread in Ripon? The truths that he taught, are they acknowledged there? The unity for which he sacrificed himself, is it prized there? Wilfrid Sunday! what do men mean, when they call the thousand and one vestiges of better times, visible in England, lingering relics of Catholicism? What lingers in them or about them? What truth, what helpfulness, what holiness? If they be relics, where is their virtue? Whom have they healed? What have they wrought? When will people understand how unreal all such language is? Poetry is not Catholicism, though Catholicism is deeply and essentially poetical; and when a thing has become beautiful in the eyes of an antiquary it has ceased to be useful: its beauty consists in its being something which men cannot work with. A broken

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choir in a woody dell,—if it be sweet to the eyes, and not bitter in the thoughts,—if it soothes, but humbles not, what is it but a mischievous thing over which it were well to invoke a railroad, or any other devastating change. Let us be men, and not dreamers: one cannot dream in religion without profaning it. When men strive about the decorations of the altar, and the lights, and the rood-screen, and the credence, and the piscina, and the sedilia, and the postures here and the postures there, and the people are not first diligently instructed in the holy mysteries, or brought to realise the Presence and the Sacrifice, no less than the commemorative Sacrament,—what is it all but puerility, raised into the wretched dignity of profaneness by the awfulness of the subject-matter? Is there not already very visible mischief in the architectural pedantry displayed here and there, and the grotesque earnestness about pretty trivialities, and the stupid reverence for the *formal* past? Altars are the playthings of nineteenth-century societies, and we are taught that the Church cannot change, modify, or amplify her worship: she is, so we learn, a thing of a past century, not a life of all centuries; and there is abusive wrangling and peevish sarcasm, while men are striving to force some favourite antiquated clothing of their own over the majestic figure of true, solid, abiding Catholicism. It is downright wickedness to be going thus *a-mumming* (a buffoonery, doubtless correct enough out of some mediæval costume-book), when we should be doing plain work for our age, and our neighbours. But *sentiment* is

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easier than *action*, and an embroidered frontal a prettier thing than an ill-furnished house and a spare table, yet, after all, it is not so striking: and a wan face gives more force to a sacred rite, than an accurately clipped stole, or a handsomely swelling chasuble. The world was once taught by a holy man that there was nothing merely external in Christianity; the value of its forms consists in their being the truthful expressions of inwardly existing convictions; and what convictions of the English poor, who come unconfessed to the Blessed Sacrifice, does all this modern ancientness of vestment and adorning express? Children are fond of *playing at funerals;* it is touching to see nature's fears so working at that innocent age: whereas to see grown-up children, book in hand, *playing at mass*, putting ornament before truth, suffocating the inward by the outward, bewildering the poor instead of leading them, revelling in Catholic sentiment instead of offering the acceptable sacrifice of hardship and austerity,—this is a fearful, indeed a sickening development of the peculiar iniquity of the times, a masterpiece of Satan's craft. This is not the way to become Catholic again; it is only a profaner kind of Protestantism than any we have seen hitherto. Austerity is the mother of beauty: only so is beauty legitimately born. A hard life—that is the impressive thing, when its secrets escape here and there, at this time and at that time, as they are sure to do, however humble and given to concealment the penitent may be. A gentle yet manly inroad into modern effeminacies, simplicity of furniture, plainness of living, largeness of alms, a mingling with

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the poor, something of monastic discipline in households, the self-denying observance of seasons, somewhat of seclusion, silence and spiritual retreat:—these should come first. When they have wrought their proper miracles, then will come the beauty and the poetry of Catholic ages; and that will be soon enough for them to come. It sounds poetical when we hear of the Saint's sackcloth beneath his regal or pontifical attire: do we find it hard to be fully possessed with Catholic truth when we worship in a square chapel, with sash-windows and a plastered ceiling? If it be so, what manner of Catholics are we? Verily not such as wore sackcloth in times of old, and went bravely through trouble confessing Christ. While the regulated fast, and the morning meditation, and the systematic examination of conscience are irksome restraints, under which men fret and grow restive; it is dangerous, indeed, that they should be indulging in the gorgeous chancel and the dim aisle, the storied window and the chequered floor, or even the subdued and helpful excitement of the holy chant. Let us not travel too quickly on this road, though it be a very good road to be travelling, so long as it runs parallel with improved practice,—or rather some little behind it, so as to be safer for self-regulated penitents, which most of us seem wilfully determined to remain. And there is yet another more excellent way of advancing the Catholic cause, which the young would do well to look to who require some field for their zeal, and are turning it into the poetry of religion. What poetry more sweet, and yet withal more awfully real—

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indeed, hourly realised by the sensible cuttings of the very Cross—than the pursuit of Holy Virginity? What is the building of a cathedral to the consecration of a living body? What is the sacrifice of money to the oblation of an undivided heart? What are the troubles and the pains of life to the struggles of the sealed affections, struggles which come never to the surface, plaints which have no audience, sorrows which cannot ask for sympathy, and haply joys of which it is but a weak thing to say that they are not fathomable? What, O young men and maidens! what is more like an actual, protracted, lifelong Crucifixion, than the preservation of Holy Virginity, while every action of your gentle lives sings, like our sweet Lady, a perpetual Magnificat?

Reader! this strife of synods, these reigns of kings, this perplexity of dates,—has it tried your kind patience, and out of the bewildering weariness of the dry crowded narrative, do you find it hard to put before your mind's eye what sort of a man St. Wilfrid was? I think you have learned to love him for all the dryness of his story, and if to love him, then I am sure you have learned so to have him in your thoughts, that you would know him again amid a multitude of Saints, and pick him out of the crowd as none other than veritable Wilfrid. Yes—you can see him, a "quick walker," with "never a sour face," yet withal a man given to read dry books, such as ecclesiastical canons; just as when you read Clarendon, you can see poor Bishop Wren of Norwich, though all you are told is, that he "was a crabbed man, well versed in Greek litur-

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gies." Eddi tells us that St. Wilfrid's special devotions were to St. Peter and St. Andrew; and this tells us much; for his honour of St. Peter symbolises his great purpose, and his love of St. Andrew reveals a meditative gentleness, never forgetful of the prayer answered in his youth in the oratory at Rome. You can see the young bishop riding about Yorkshire, with his church-masons at his heels, and his precentor at his side. And then—with what deeply grateful reverence should we not sum up such a score of deeds for us unworthy Englishmen!—the trainer of St. Acca, the educator of the northern nobles, the tutor of St. Willebrord, the converter of Cedwalla, the confessor of St. Etheldreda, the adviser of St. Ethelred, the consecrator of St. Swibert, the converter of the men of Friesland and of Sussex, the finisher of the conversion of England, the restorer of Catholic uniformity, the introducer of the Benedictine Rule into the north—one man was all these things, so mightily wrought the grace of God! and that one man, cheerful and fresh-hearted ever, was a fair and beautiful Saxon youth, who stood erewhile at Chalons on the Saone, bound and stripped for death, and, through God's loving-kindness to our dear country, missed, yet hardly missed, the crown of martyrdom.

END OF VOL. I.

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